THE CROSBY COLLECTION 1926–1977

Part One: 1926–1934

FRED REYNOLDS

To Ren
With Best Wishes
Fred Reynolds
(November, 1991)

THE CROSBY COLLECTION

(1926 - 1977)

A Review Of The Commercial Recordings Made By Bing Crosby

(Part One: 1926 - 1934)

by

FRED REYNOLDS

Also by Fred Reynolds

The Road To Bing Crosby (Discography) (co-author)
Road To Hollywood (Bing Crosby Films Book)
Road To Hollywood (Revised and enlarged edition)

Fiction:

A Quiet Place In The Country

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

When "The Road To Bing Crosby" Discography was published an attempt was made, for the first time, to indicate the variations in different "takes" of recordings. Most of that part of the work was undertaken by my co-author in that venture, the late Bob Roberts, and his efforts have made easier the task of meticulously rechecking all known existing takes to show, wherever possible, a simple means of identification. "The Alternate Bing Crosby" (Colin Pugh: 1988) has, with the author's consent, similarly been of great help. I hereby express my gratitude to Bob, posthumously, and to Colin.

I also thank Charles Wareing for his assistance in identifying instrumental soloists in Paul Whiteman's Orchestra.

The Hobby-horse

" -- a little filly-folly which carries you out for the present hour - a maggot, a butterfly, a picture, a fiddle-stick - or an anything which a man makes a shift to get astride on, to canter it away from the cares and solicitudes of life. "Tis as useful a beast as in the whole creation --"

Laurence Sterne
("The Life And Opinions Of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman")

PREFACE

The first serious attempt at listing the commercial recordings made by Bing Crosby was "Crosby On Record: 1926-1950" by Edward Mello and Tom McBride (1950). Prior to that lists had been included in "Bing" by Ted and Larry Crosby (c.1937), "The Story Of Bing Crosby" by Ted Crosby (1946), "Bing Crosby And The Bing Crosby Style" by Dr J T H Mize (1946) and "The Incredible Crosby" by Barry Ulanov (1948). Subsequent discographies, beginning with "The Road To Bing Crosby", have sought to show, inter alia, recording companies and catalogue numbers of issued records. After more than sixty years of Crosby records being available world-wide the number of issues and re-issues - from original "78 rpm" discs to LP's, cassette tapes and compact discs - has for most of the recordings reached high figures, many of those issues being now virtually unobtainable. Whilst it is appreciated that some diehard, veteran collectors are deeply concerned with original issues their interests have already been well documented and catered for and the information they require has been adequately provided. There seems, therefore, no good purpose in repetition when details of original and other issues are available through the various Crosby Clubs and Societies throughout the world; when, too, issues are so often soon withdrawn and superseded. To catalogue them once again would be of little service and would, incidentally, enlarge this book to unmanageable proportions. (The reference to "veteran collectors" is not intended to suggest that all Bing Crosby admirers must be aging survivors of the 'twenties or 'thirties who worshipped him as teenagers and now drool over his memory, mourning for and dreaming of their own lost youth. Some are, of course, and perhaps some do but it is surprising how many younger people enjoy Crosby's work and how people of all age groups from children to octogenarians regularly subscribe to the numerous world-wide Crosby Societies.)

The word "discography" has come, by usage, to mean lists of labels and numbers but no-one, it appears, has thought to take it more literally and just write about discs. It would be a misconception to consider that LP "sleeve" notes are adequate for the purpose: some do, indeed, reach a high standard but all are restricted by the space available and restrained by their objective to sell the product. In presenting this work, therefore, I have eschewed what has become the normal practice and chosen to approach the subject in another way. I hope that readers will find this "different" discography interesting, informative and an encouragement to replay records that, from the huge Crosby output, may have been neglected.

It is an experience common among all enthusiastic followers of entertainers, and particularly those of popular singers, that critical faculties are suspended where their own favourite is concerned. Too often reviews

and biographies become hagiographical and there is little realisation that exorbitant praise of a less worthwhile effort, raising it to a parity with something of greater value, also has the reverse effect of devaluing the more deserving achievement and destroying credibility. I have never found that Bing Crosby admirers are, generally, any exception to the rule but they may be more readily forgiven; there is no more beguiling or seductive tone than his, at its best, in the whole history of popular music. My own conception of Crosby has, through the years and by expansion of interest to other forms of music, undergone changes in perspective but although this book was at least partly motivated by escapism (as is the great majority of Crosby's work) its main source of origin was an enduring admiration. With this in mind I have tried to be strictly fair and objective in what is very much subjective territory, where the boundary between fact and opinion is often obscure, and avoid any charge of sycophancy: it is, however, an undeniable fact that a large proportion of Crosby's output is praiseworthy. My only recourse has been to take as my dictum those thoughts of W S Gilbert which, paraphrased, may be expressed as:

"When everything is something
Then nothing is anything"

FJR

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BIOGRAPHICAL

Bing Crosby's life story has been well chronicled and it is not within the scope of this book to go into great detail about it. In order to bring his recording career into perspective, however, a brief account is necessary. (Brief career notes have also been shown in the main section of the book, preceding each year's recordings).

He was born, of Irish antecedents, at Tacoma in the state of Washington, USA on 3rd May, 1903. Unreliable registering of births and the absence of a birth certificate led to his belief that his birthday was 2nd May, 1904. After his death a baptismal certificate was found which revealed the true date of birth (although, in his book "Bing Crosby And The Bing Crosby Style" (1946) Dr J T H Mize had it right). Because he thought that the second day of May was his birthday it was the one date on the calendar that he chose not to record. On the true birthdate, however, he recorded in 1929, 1944 and 1954.

In 1906 his parents moved the family (eventually there were five boys and two girls, Bing being the fourth child) across the state to Spokane where he grew up in normal, lower middle-class circumstances doing part-time jobs, enjoying sport and receiving education first at Webster Grade School and later at the Jesuit Gonzaga High School and Gonzaga College. At High School and College he showed a propensity for music and joined a group called "The Juicy Seven" and later an outfit called the "Musicaladers" as drummer and singer. Deciding that he liked music better than studying law he left Gonzaga with his friend Alton Rinker and made his way to Hollywood and Los Angeles. Under the auspices of Al's sister, performing professionally under the name of Mildred Bailey, they obtained some work ("Crosby and Rinker - Two Boys And A Piano - Singing Songs In Their Own Way") in theatres and clubs. During this time they made their first recording, "I've Got The Girl", which couldn't have been less conspicuous. They were drawn to the attention of Paul Whiteman and the great man hired them. After initial success they failed to appeal to New York audiences and Whiteman teamed them with another newcomer, Harry Barris, to form "The Rhythm Boys". Barris, while having no special or superior talent as an entertainer (although he later wrote some outstanding songs), had verve and enthusiasm and seemed, like Ringo Starr to the Beatles in a future generation, to serve as a catalyst to Crosby and Rinker. Their act, novel and more exciting than that of previous groups met with an enthusiastic reception.

Crosby's records with Whiteman and with the Rhythm Boys were popular and he became even better known after his entry into films, first in "King Of Jazz", a Whiteman-starring vehicle in which Bing made a few appearances. (Appropriately enough the first screen sound ever heard from him was "Music Hath Charms", a Jack Yellen - Milton Ager song, sung over the opening credits; he was to confirm Congreve's affirmation by soothing many a savage breast in the years to come). He missed his chance to sing one of the film's big songs, "Song Of The Dawn", when, in an incident typical of his youthful irresponsibility, he was convicted on a drunk-driving charge and received a gaol sentence. After "King Of Jazz" the Rhythm Boys left Paul Whiteman and a little later joined Gus Arnheim's orchestra. If Crosby's period with Whiteman can be considered his training ground then his time with Gus Arnheim was surely his launching pad. Arnheim's orchestra may have lacked the calibre of the Whiteman musicians but it was competent, perhaps underrated, and its regular west coast broadcasts gave Bing and the Rhythm Boys plenty of exposure. Furthermore, as it was the resident band of the fashionable Cocoanut Grove of the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, the trio was being seen by people who mattered in the entertainment world. Eventually the Rhythm Boys broke up, Crosby made brief appearances in a few films and was, in 1930, signed by Mack Sennett to make a series of two-reelers. In September of that year he married Wilma Winifred Wyatt, a Wiiliam Fox Studio starlet known professionally as Dixie Lee. (They were, within the next eight years, to have four sons - Gary, twins Phillip and Dennis, and Lindsay). Meanwhile he was causing interest with radio broadcasts and solo records and after his first coast-to-coast solo broadcast on 2nd September, 1931 and his own first radio series he quickly became nationally popular. A record-breaking appearance at the Paramount Theatre, New York preceded his being signed by Paramount to appear in "The Big Broadcast". (His subsequent film career is documented in detail in "Road To Hollywood").

Parallel with his radio and film activities he pursued an unprecedented recording career. After three years with Brunswick (1931-1934) he signed exclusive contracts with Decca over the next twenty-one years. In 1936 he began a radio series for Kraft Music Hall that lasted for ten incredibly successful years and in the following year was awarded a Doctor of Philosophy in Music certificate by Gonzaga University. In 1940 came "Road To Singapore", the first in a series of Crosby-Bob Hope films that packed the cinemas. The "Road" pairing was an ideal blend. Hope was more than Crosby's comic support and Bing was no mere "straight" man for Bob. Always equal partners they both took full honours. As the "romantic" singer Crosby usually won Dorothy Lamour but some humorously contrived endings varied the rule.

Crosby became, quite simply, the biggest star in entertainment. During the war years he toured the States entertaining at troop encampments and hospitals and raising US War Bond funds. He was awarded the Film Academy's "Oscar" for best male actor for 1944 ("Going My Way") and in that year he toured Europe entertaining troops in camps and hospitals. In 1946 he left Kraft and subsequently had radio series with Philco, Chesterfield and General Electric. His wife, Dixie, died in 1952 and he re-married in October, 1957 to Kathryn Grant. They were to have two sons, Harry and Nathaniel and his only daughter, Mary Frances.

From 1956 until his death in 1977 he recorded on a free-lance basis for every major Company in the US and for several in the UK in addition, from 1959 to 1963, to having his own "Project Records" Company. In 1960 he made his first-ever recordings in the UK. He became, in 1964, Master of Ceremonies or "host" of the popular "Hollywood Palace" television series but a weekly domestic comedy series in which he starred on television in 1964-5 fared less well and finished after only one season. During the 1960's, however, he made a number of television "specials" which were well received.

In January, 1974 he had an operation to remove part of a lung, having contracted a rare fungus disease whilst on safari in Kenya the previous October. After his recovery he resumed work and recorded more albums during the next three years, including several in London, which revived public interest. In March, 1976 in Los Angeles he gave the first of a series of concerts which he brought to England later that year but at the Ambassador Auditorium in Pasadena the following March he was injured when, at the end of the concert, he fell into the vacant orchestra pit whilst taking a final bow. In September, 1977 he gave a further series of concerts in England and on 13th October he flew to Spain for golf and relaxation. The next day, Friday 14th October at about 6.30 p.m., having just completed eighteen holes on La Moraleja Golf Course near Madrid, he collapsed and died from a massive heart attack. In an unparalleled achievement of stardom in films, radio, records, stage and television over a period exceeding fifty years Bing Crosby had attained a success and popularity of immense legendary stature.

In a radio interview during the 1960's Bing was asked what he would consider to be a suitable epitaph for himself. With hardly a pause he gave a typically modest and unassuming reply: "Just an ordinary guy who could carry a tune". He was only half right - he could most certainly carry a tune but he was an extraordinary guy.

INTRODUCTION

It is impossible, however one tries to counter the tendency, not to use superlatives when writing about Bing Crosby; his talent was prodigious. He had not one career but several - in all of which he excelled - that interwove into a tapestry of golden threads. As long ago as the 1940's it was said that he was "first in films, first on the air and first on phonographs - first in all except sidewalk magic", which was before his television shows and his highly successful stage concerts. Although he entitled his autobiography "Call Me Lucky" the plain fact is that he had a phenomenal natural talent that soared above all others and made him the most popular radio singer in the world, the number one film star and the most successful recording artist of all time.

Bing was so called because of his enthusiasm as a small boy for a character called "Bingo" in a comic strip, "The Bingville Bugle". He also became known as "Der Bingle" (Germany), "Le Bing" (France), "El Bingo" (Latin-America), "Bing Kuo Shi Bi" (China) and, in the USA, "Mr America", "Uncle Sam Without Whiskers", "America's No.1 Minstrel" and Bob Hope's fondly-coined "Old Groaner". If then, as often said, a nickname is an indication of popularity the friendly appellations reflected the true measure of international admiration and regard in which he was held.

Two books, by authors who were no doubt hoping to benefit by following a particularly nauseous trend, have attempted character assassination by interpreting discreditably almost his every action. Both books, significantly, were published after his death. Opinions expressed by countless other books and articles and by people who knew him well, however, have established the truth. He was modest about his achievements, unpretentious and sincerely self-deprecating in the face of unprecedented praise and hero-worship. Although, as he said, he didn't want to wallow in humility, he genuinely believed that he was an ordinary fellow who was lucky to do things he enjoyed and get paid for it. A man of diverse interests and widely articulate he was an interviewers' delight with his adroit, tautologous, sometimes pedantic vocabulary. (The late Michael Holliday, a great admirer of Crosby, once told the author that one of the many things about Bing that fascinated him was the ability to speak knowledgably "off the cuff" on almost any subject). His charitable activities raised millions of dollars for a myriad causes for none of which he ever sought self-publicity. In many ways he was the antithesis of film star material: features that were pleasant but with protruding ears, premature baldness and shrewd, pale blue eyes that could become very cold; a man of medium height and build with a penchant for comfortable rather than fashionable clothes he was

not cast in the classic mould of a Barrymore, Gable, Taylor or Flynn. A lack of synthetic or superficial glamour, however, was more than compensated by a natural relaxed charm that appealed to both men and women alike. In a field where jealousies are not unknown he was never envious of any of his competitors although, it must be admitted, he had little reason to be. His projected public image was based largely on his real character and successfully portrayed a carefree, "Rover-boy", slightly ne'er-do-well attitude with an overall masterly inactivity that was never a handicap. Yet, after working with Crosby on the film "White Chistmas", Danny Kaye could say, "There isn't a lazy bone in Bing's body. He works harder than any man I've met but he does it with an easy casualness that makes him look lazy. He has one of the most amazing talents I've ever seen for making hard work look easy".

Of all the many facets of his multifarious career - records, stage, television and in films as a dramatic actor, light comedian and musical star - Bing Crosby will always be remembered primarily as a singer. While learning his craft by serving apprenticeship with first class bands and instrumentalists of the 1920's and 1930's he developed a complete mastery of microphone technique in its early days. Association with the Paul Whiteman orchestra and a plenitude of talented and original musicians such as Bix Beiderbecke, Frank Trumbauer, the Dorsey brothers, Eddie Lang and Joe Venuti stirred a natural jazz response that became manifest in his vocal phrasing and whistling. (As a siffleur, from his first recorded phrases in "From Monday On" when a faint obbligato supported an Al Rinker vocal, few could match him. Later his whistling was to become casually characteristic of his apparent unconcern and a perfect complement to his singing). His early efforts showed how he was absorbing the jazz atmosphere that he found so musically stimulating at a time when his singing had necessarily to be subject to and only part of a complete musical arrangement. (The Whiteman recordings were intended primarily for dancing and Crosby received no label credit). The jazz inflected subtle phrasing, the swinging quality in interpretation, the spontaneous improvising and extemporising from the melody line were all direct legacies of his early experiences and a natural development of a stupendous, innate and inventive musicianship. Anyone who has a collection of early Crosby recordings has also, *ipso facto*, a very fine jazz collection. Many people consider that the period from 1931 to 1934, when virtually all his records were masterpieces and he created a new dimension in popular singing, was the zenith of his achievement. His early training also laid the foundation for a vocal versatility that was, and still is, unparalleled in the history of popular music. Encouraged and persuaded by Jack Kapp, the founder of US Decca Records, to widen his scope he achieved, with a chameleon-like quality, artistic and commercial

successes in every ramification of popular song (jazz, blues, swing, western, hill-billy, folk songs, ballads, love songs, children's songs, vaudeville, humorous, music-hall, narrations, philosophical, novelty, Christmas songs, sacred, patriotic, Hawaiian, Latin-American, French, Irish, show songs, musical comedy, film songs). In fact everything from "Ave Maria" to "Zing A Little Zong" and from Brahms' "Lullaby" to "Your Socks Don't Match" and all with elegance and good taste; everything with perhaps the exception of "rock 'n' roll" and in his later years he made an attempt at or a near approach to that ("Seven Nights A Week") but without any conspicuous success. With an astonishing variety of accompanists and partners he covered virtually the whole spectrum of twentieth century popular music.

A rapid rise in his development as a solo artist in the early 1930's earned him, with his ever-increasing popularity, the dubious title of "King Of The Crooners". The term "crooner" was used to distinguish the microphone vocalists from the bigger-voiced singers of the day such as Al Jolson, Lawrence Tibbett, Everett Marshall and John McCormack for the demarcation line between "popular" singers and those classically trained was not so clearly defined in pre-microphone days. It is ironic, as "croon" means "to sing softly and intimately", that it was applied to Crosby at a time when his voice was at its most powerful. (It could have been more appositely applied to Perry Como with his light, pleasing style but the expression had become archaic when he became popular). Crosby, however, was not the first of the "crooners"; that distinction, perhaps, should go to "Whispering" Jack Smith or Rudy Vallee who, in the pre-microphone era, used a megaphone and later an adapted public address system to amplify his voice. None of them, however, including Bing, ever considered it a compliment to be so called. The term, with its faint tone of derision, was used without discrimination and even big-voiced Arthur Tracy, "The Street Singer", strongly objected and denied the justice of it when he was so described. When Crosby mastered the art of using the new carbon microphone it was claimed by some that it gave added resonance to his voice but sadly for this theory it never seemed to do the same for others. The microphone was the biggest single factor in the evolution of modern popular singing for with it came the necessity to develop new techniques; it brought intimacy to performances and, with lyrics becoming more important, Crosby became supreme when he introduced original phrasing and nuances of pronunciation and diction. (His enunciation of vowel sounds was very effective and attractive, e.g. "oo" as in "moon" in many of his recordings).

There are artists who have good voices but are inferior singers and there are others who have ordinary voices but use them well. Crosby, for

at least three decades had a magnificent voice and was always an excellent singer. Throughout he retained a deceptively easy casual style, mellow and "happy" sounding, natural and completely untrained other than by a vast experience. There was more than a grain of truth in comedy dialogue from one of his 1952 radio shows when Peggy Lee confronts him with being too nonchalant about his singing:

PL: Well, Bing, when you sing nowadays you're supposed to really live it - let the world know what your problem is.

BC: *I got no problem. Everything's fine.*

PL: What I mean is when you're singing a modern song you should get upset, become violent and tear yourself to shreds.

BC: *Lady, I have enough trouble remembering the words, to throw a breakdown.*

PL: ---- the new school of singers would suffer with loud and extravagant lament the loss of an unattainable sweetheart.

BC: *It's only a song - who needs her?*

PL: You don't care to suffer?

BC: *Why should I suffer? I <u>like</u> to sing.*

He had the knack of being able to stand still and relaxed whilst singing, without nervous or unnecessary gestures, without arm-waving (a la Jolson) or swaying (Sinatra) or the need to grip the microphone as a crutch or comfort (Bennett and many others) or cry into it (Ray), cavort (Davis) or even wear a fixed grin (the majority). (This is not intended as a disparagement of other singers but to show, by example, mannerisms eschewed in the Crosby style). A minimum of physical activity before the microphone is, paradoxically, one of the most difficult accomplishments ("*Ars est celare artem*" - "True art is to conceal art") and one that most popular singers fail to achieve. His style, in short, was an object lesson in economy of effort and on how to achieve the most by apparently doing the least. He let his voice and phrasing have full effect without resorting to sickly grins and looks of anguish. There seems to be little recognition that an absence of affectation, idiosyncrasies and gimmickry brings less distraction and enhances the material. Conversely, when the script or occasion called for action Crosby's routines, mobility and manoeuvres seemed effortless examples of perfect timing with the rhythm and words of a song. There are numerous such instances in his films ("Sunshine Cake", "Cool Of The Evening", "Now You Has Jazz", "Zing A Little Zong", "Meet The Sun Halfway" - the list could go on and on). He also had an innate ability to sound sincere

about every song even if he might actually be thinking of the nearest golf course. (For what intelligent adult could really identify with the triteness of some of the lyrics that singers are called upon to interpret?)

Crosby's voice, perhaps because of the longevity of his career, seemed to undergo more changes and distinctive periods than most. His first records reveal a husky-voiced light baritone quality that, after two or three years developed a lachrymose sound that lent an individual appeal to his ballad singing. Never the possessor of a wide, controlled range it was, at its most extensive, only about one and a half octaves. This, however, was more than adequate as the vast majority of popular songs are composed well within this compass and only stylists such as Cleo Laine, Yma Sumac, Mel Torme and Sarah Vaughan exceeded it in their improvisations. Crosby's vocal style, then, was developed within its natural limits with an effective contrast between the upper and lower registers. The transition between the two was never as smooth and undetectable as with trained singers and indeed as with some untrained but the warmth and resonance of the lower register was so pronounced that it made his voice sound deeper than it was and the change to a higher register, which had a tenor quality, produced an effect of pleasing dynamic contrast. It has been suggested that had Bing Crosby followed a different type of singing career, i.e. concert or opera, he would have been equally successful but this author does not subscribe to that view. Even if his voice could have been developed to a required standard of range and volume he would have had to abandon those natural assets which made him the nonpareil of "popular" singers. An opera singer has to subordinate his own character to that of the role he is portraying whereas the "popular" singer fashions his material in his own personality and style; and that was the essence of Crosby's success. The vocal devices that came naturally to him - delaying or advancing a note, portamento, slurring, tilting or "bending" by adding a mordent note, scat, singing behind or ahead of the beat - always seemed just right and gave his phrasing a unique interpretation. Certainly they would have been "ironed out" with formal training.

In 1931 it was alleged that Crosby developed "nodes" on his vocal cords which necessitated his voice being rested for a short period. After that, it was said, the voice returned a little lower in pitch. There is, however, no evidence of this on his recordings. During the middle and late 1930's the timbre of Crosby's voice changed quite dramatically. The earlier full-voiced, bravura performance gradually became more polished, the huskiness disappeared, the resonance developed an unprecedented beauty, the transition between registers became smoother and the voice acquired an almost oleaginous flexibility. To this day afficionados argue about Crosby's "best"

period - the earlier "raw" voice or the later more controlled one - but no one can doubt that during the peak years of the late 1930's and early 1940's the tonal beauty has never been surpassed by anyone. His voice had achieved the simplicity of perfection for its purpose; a simplicity resulting from the absence of gimmicks and complexities; a simplicity of matchless quality. Then came a period during the mid-1940's in which the consistency of high quality showed some lapses. There was some criticism that his standard had declined and it was true that on some recordings his voice revealed an untypical and uncharacteristic tremor. He was, however, still well ahead of his rivals; his records outsold those of any other singer and his popularity remained undiminished. Indeed from a box-office point of view the mid-1940's brought some of his greatest triumphs. By the late 1940's his voice had regained all its earlier authority if not its sweetest tone and it was not until the mid-1950's, when he was in his own fifties, that inevitably some indication of deterioration began to appear. Very gradually the lower register became "thicker" and a struggle for high notes became evident. Nevertheless he still made some fine recordings, could still handle any type of popular material and, using lower keys and working within increasing limitations was able to bring all the resources of his expertise, musicianship, professionalism and experience to his performances. Perhaps, also, the longevity of his career was assisted by the frailty of talent among his competitors. He continued to record every year until his death in 1977 at the age of 74 although between 1969 and 1974, when some thought his style passe, were lean years. In 1975 he made the first of several albums in London after he was persuaded that there was still a public for his type of material. As a septuagenarian his voice, of course, could hardly bear comparison with that of his palmy days but, notwithstanding, some of his later records proved remarkably worthy. Proof, if any is needed, of the pre-eminence of the Crosby career is that not only an international public but most contemporary vocalists and musicians regarded him as being peerless. It is unfortunate, then, that although nothing can ever detract from achievements of his earlier years the radio disc jockeys of the 1960's and 1970's should have seemed almost invariably to feature his then current recordings and that, consequently, rising generations of listeners were largely denied the fruits of his golden years.

Bing Crosby said that his style was influenced by his preferences for Ethel Waters, Midred Bailey, Louis Armstrong and Al Jolson. His phrasing from early days may have owed something to the first three but his records show very little indication of any debt to the entertainingly histrionic Jolson. Before he left his home-town of Spokane Crosby was an ardent admirer of Al, having seen him in the stage musicals "Bombo" and "Sinbad". (Crosby was then an adolescent working as assistant in the property

department of the Auditorium Theatre where the shows appeared). It might be more accurate to say that Jolson was an inspiration to him. With some imagination one can discern an occasional Jolson-like sound on about half-a-dozen of Bing's early records ("Side By Side", "From Monday On", "High Water", "I Found A Million Dollar Baby", "Now That You're Gone", "Goodnight Sweetheart") but from a vast output the odd phrase or line on a few records is slender evidence on which to base an influence. It may be, of course, that Bing referred more to stage or club appearances - one can only speculate - but the fact remains that their styles are poles apart: Jolson, flamboyant and big-voiced, could be heard throughout the largest theatres without using a microphone while Crosby was an intimate microphone singer with a deceptively easy manner of delivery. When Jolson appeared in his first film as "The Jazz Singer" it was a complete misnomer for he never sang jazz; his forte lay in other directions. If Crosby didn't "belt" like Jolson neither did he whine nasally like Vallee. During the 1920's and early 1930's most of the leading vocalists and band singers had light tenor, thin voices, sloppy or over-precise diction and often a somewhat effeminate style. People such as "Whispering" Jack Smith, Rudy Vallee. Gene Austin, Will Osborne, Nick Lucas, Donald Novis, Morton Downey and Harry Richman were among the most pleasing and the most popular. (In the UK Sam Browne and Al Bowlly were the contemporary leaders). Crosby's nearest rival might have been Russ Columbo but he died in a tragic accident with a gun in 1934; he was a good ballad singer but did not have Crosby's other qualities. When Crosby first came on the national scene his new masculine and virile style was entirely without precedent and he soon left his rivals behind. It is, of course, impossible for anyone musically impressionable to be entirely uninfluenced but one seeks hard to find any antecedents of the Crosby style. He seems to have been an almost complete original but he did benefit enormously from his early association with jazz musicians.

If influences upon him are hard to trace there was no lack of people influenced by him. It has been truly said that he was the greatest innovator and most influential singer of all. Once he attained international stature through his films everybody, it seemed, wanted to copy him. Singers were proud to be known as their national Bing Crosby. Canadian, English, French, German, West Indian *et al*; there were "Bing Crosbys" everywhere and it speaks volumes for the original that he survived the universal glut of imitators. Neither was it a passing fad; among those who were themselves to become famous and admit their debt to Crosby were Dick Todd, Bob Eberly, Dick Haymes, Perry Como, Dean Martin, brother Bob Crosby, Pat Boone and abroad, Al Bowlly, Archie Lewis, Denny Dennis and Michael Holliday. There was hardly a singer after Crosby became pre-eminent

who did not either consciously or otherwise seek to find the secret of his style and phrasing. Frank Sinatra wisely developed his own individual style but even he, in his formative years, learned a lot from Crosby. One has only to listen to some of Elvis Presley's records to hear the "scoop" to lower notes that is plainly derivative. Danny Kaye once said that everyone who worked with Bing Crosby finished by trying to sing like him. In passing it should be mentioned that artists who appeared with Crosby on radio, in films or on records always seemed to benefit from the occasion and excel themselves in his company. He was quite unselfish and regularly had keys transposed to accommodate his guests if necessary.

From the time of Bing Crosby's first recording ("I've Got The Girl") in 1926 until his last, a few days before his death in 1977, there was never a year in which he didn't record. This in itself must be a unique achievement and permanent proof of his enduring popularity. It was a half-century that saw depression, profitability, set-backs, recoveries and radical changes in the industry. In 1926 it was relatively small but the introduction of "electric" recording superseded "acoustic" methods and the improved quality gave rise to optimism. Sales were steady if not exceptional until the financial crash of 1929 which badly hit the records industry. It is no exaggeration to say that it struggled for survival during the late 1920's and early 1930's. In 1933 the recording director of Brunswick, Jack Kapp, left the Company after a disagreement and in the following year, together with Milton Rackmil and financial assistance from E R Lewis the head of English Decca, formed the American Decca Company. His first contracted artist was Bing Crosby who had then completed three years with Brunswick. By concentrating production on cheap 35 cent records without loss of quality and maintaining a policy that ensured Bing being the leading Decca artist they together were the foremost figures in the revival of the industry. Kapp's loyalty to Crosby was reciprocated and, despite attractive offers from other Companies, Bing remained with Decca for twenty one years.

The war years brought difficulties. A shortage of shellac, used in the making of records, brought problems and millions of discs were re-cycled to enable new ones to be produced. For the first part of 1941, during which time Crosby made no recordings, ASCAP (American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers) banned its music from radio in a controversy with the broadcasting networks and, consequently, record companies were unable to exploit their material on the air. When Crosby resumed, on 23rd May, he recorded thirty four songs in a little over two months. Further reverses to the industry occurred when on 1st August, 1942 the American Federation of Musicians came out on strike against the record companies and the dispute was not resolved until September,1943

(in the case of Victor and Columbia the strike lasted until November, 1944). During this time no musicians were allowed to record and Bing Crosby and other leading singers made some recordings with vocal group accompaniments. In anticipation of the strike Kapp stockpiled a quantity of recordings and from January to July, 1942 Crosby recorded no fewer than fifty titles. Another intensive recording schedule occurred in November and December, 1947 when the AFM called another strike with effect from 1st January, 1948. During the two months Crosby recorded, under the personal supervision of Jack Kapp, forty five songs. Little wonder that he was known as "One-take Crosby". (The professionalism that Crosby had developed through the years enabled him in most cases to record satisfactory performances at the first take. It was only upon Kapp's insistence that he made a second take, in case of accident or damage to the first master, for he was never pernickety or an absolute perfectionist about his recordings. It was typical of the man and it is a tribute to his expertise that so many came right the first time). His records continued to out-sell those of all others and during the 1940's he had numerous "million sellers". In 1945 the BBC (UK) reported that two-thirds of total requests received for their "Forces Favourites", a programme broadcast to allied troops throughout the world, were for songs by Bing Crosby.

In 1948 the virtually unbreakable long-playing microgroove record was introduced by Columbia in the US and stereophonic recordings followed in 1956. An attempt had been made in 1931 with a form of long-player but it was not successful. In 1948, however, it gave a fillip to the industry and created new interest. Whereas before and during the war the popularity of a song had been measured by its music-sheet sales the criterion now became the number of records sold and "top tens" and "charts" were the guide lines to attract the post-war generation. Unsavoury aspects such as chart manipulation, "payola" and "cover" versions (when another artist would copy an original performance that was proving successful) appeared in the industry when it set its sights on the affluent rising generation of teenagers. Musical standards and tastes were lowered to elementary levels as raucous "skiffle" and "rock 'n' roll" swamped the popular field in the effort to create an elemental excitement for the young and the musically naive. Gresham's Law was proved again: the scene became shoddy, cheap, loud and nasty.

In 1954 Decca issued a 5 LP "Musical Biography" set of some of Bing Crosby's most popular recordings. It was unprecedented and showed the esteem in which he was held. In December, 1955 Crosby ended his contract with Decca (Jack Kapp had died in 1949) and from then on he free-lanced his services. In 1959 he formed his own Company, "Project Records", for

which his recordings were leased to major Companies (MGM, Warner Brothers, Decca) for distribution. He sold the Company to Columbia four years later. Decca paid tribute to Crosby in 1961 when they issued a 15 LP set, "Bing's Hollywood" (numbered BING 1-15) of his recordings of songs from his films. It was the largest set ever issued of recordings by one artist.

Although from the early to mid-1950's the sales of Bing Crosby's records declined as younger singers such as Frankie Laine, Johnny Ray, Guy Mitchell and the groups came to the forefront the more discerning public never lost interest - in fact he had another "million seller" in 1956 with "True Love" - and he continued recording until his death. In a phenomenally successful career his records have sold over one thousand million copies, more than those of any other individual performer. It is even more astonishing when one considers that record sales during the 1930's and 1940's, when Crosby was at peak popularity, were but a fraction of those in later years. As with his highly successful radio shows the Crosby collection of records encompasses a wide variety of accompanying artists: from Louis Armstrong to Dorothy Kirsten, from Durante to Grace Kelly, from Fred Astaire to Orson Welles, everyone was happy to work with him. His accompanying orchestras and musicians were just as diverse: from large orchestras varying from Ellington to Longines and Billy May, from instrumentalists such as Buddy Cole, Perry Botkin, Carmen Cavallero, Eddie Lang and Jascha Heifitz, and from jazz groups to "sweet" Lombardo and the brash Bregman. Special mention must be made of Victor Young and John Scott Trotter whose orchestras, more than any others, accompanied Bing on his recordings. Victor Young turned to popular music and composing after studying at Warsaw Conservatory and playing violin with the Warsaw Philharmonic. He led orchestras accompanying Crosby on many recordings during the early 1930's. Some were studio orchestras that were labelled only as "orchestral accompaniment". Later, he became musical director at Paramount and continued to accompany Crosby. John Scott Trotter, after leaving Hal Kemp's orchestra for which he had been pianist-arranger, became musical director of Bing's Kraft Music Hall radio show, succeeding Jimmy Dorsey in 1937. Subsequently he led the orchestra on Crosby's Philco, Chesterfield and General Electric shows and during all those years he was the leading accompanist on Crosby's records.

From his large output of recordings it is impossible to choose a favourite; even Bing couldn't do it and his choice, when interviewed, varied between several including "Stardust", "White Christmas" and "My Isle Of Golden Dreams". It is much easier to decide which were the least favoured for his poorer efforts were so few; "We'll Gather Lilacs", "On The Sunny Side Of

The Street", "Among My Souvenirs", "The Day After Forever" and "Be-bop Spoken Here" must come into the reckoning. Most of the others, upwards of a couple of thousand, received a universal seal of approval.

During his long career Crosby recorded for practically every major recording company in the US:

1926	:	Columbia
1926-1928	:	Victor
1928-1930	:	Columbia, Okeh
1930-1931	:	Victor
1931-1934	:	Brunswick
1934-1956	:	Decca
1956-1977		(free-lance): Amos, Anahuac, B/J, Capitol, Colpix Columbia, Concord, Daybreak, Decca, Disneyland, Golden, Liberty, London, Longines, MGM, Pickwick Polydor, Project, RCA Victor, Reprise, United Artists, United Nations, Verve, Warner Brothers, World Library of Sacred Music.

In the UK his records were issued by Argo, Decca, K-Tel, United Artists.

AWARDS

Recordings made by Bing Crosby of the songs listed below have been officially recognised as having sold more than one million copies and for each recording he was awarded a gold disc. Most of them sold several millions and his version of "White Christmas" is the biggest selling record of all time, now over forty five million copies with one authority quoting ninety millions. Most of the recordings were made in the 1940's and it is impossible to believe that only one recording prior to that decade reached the million mark. Probably many of the 1930's recordings reached that figure but inadequately kept statistics or apathy failed to reveal the truth.

Sweet Leilani (1937)
San Antonio Rose (1940)
White Christmas (1942)
Sunday, Monday Or Always (1943)
Pistol Packin' Mama (1943)
I'll Be Home For Christmas (1943)
Jingle Bells (1943)
Swinging On A Star (1944)
Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral (1944)
Don't Fence Me In (1944)
I Can't Begin To Tell You (1945)
McNamara's Band (1945)
South America, Take It Away (1946)
Alexander's Ragtime Band / The Spaniard That Blighted My Life (1947)
Whiffenpoof Song (1947)
Now Is The Hour (1947)
Galway Bay (1947)
Dear Hearts And Gentle People (1949)
Play A Simple Melody / Sam's Song (1950)
True Love (1956)

In addition to the "gold disc" recordings it has now been revealed

that with the sales of microgroove and compact discs many more Crosby recordings have attained the million seller status. They are noted accordingly in the "Recordings" section, the first one being "I Surrender, Dear". Bing Crosby also received gold discs for two LP's:

"All Star Festival" (1963) (issued by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in aid of the world's refugees). It was comprised of recordings by various artists and included the 1960 recording of "Lazy River" by Bing Crosby and Louis Armstrong.

"Bing Crosby Live at The London Palladium" (1976)

On 9th June, 1960 the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce presented a platinum disc to commemorate the sale of over two hundred million copies of his recordings. The 7" disc, bearing the title "White Christmas" on a Decca label, was set on maroon velvet and, together with a plaque, was mounted on a platinum frame in a protective, glass-faced case. The inscription on the plaque read, "To Bing Crosby, first citizen of the recording industry, whose unparalleled sales of more than 200,000,000 records is greatly responsible for the recording business becoming one of America's great industries. In respect and gratitude, Hollywood Chamber of Commerce."

In December, 1963 Bing Crosby received the Record Industry Award ("Grammy") for his outstanding contribution to the record industry.

A second platinum disc, with the title "Silent Night", was presented to him on 15th September, 1970 by Decca for sales of 300,650,000 records. Record Industries of America confirmed that his sales had reached 362,000,000, sold in twenty eight countries. (It was estimated in 1988 that sales of his records had exceeded one thousand millions).

PRESENTATION

Every known commercial recording made by Bing Crosby (from October, 1926 to December, 1934 in Part One) has been shown in chronological order and, wherever possible and appropriate, the following information included:

(a) date and venue
(b) title and composers
(c) recording company, master number and takes
(d) accompaniment
(e) other artists
(f) review
(g) identification of takes
(h) other relevant information
(i) films and shows in which the song has been featured
(j) dates of other Bing Crosby recordings of the song

Where more than one recording of the song was made (item J) the information common to all under items (h) and (i) is shown under the date of the first issued recording.

TYPES OF RECORDINGS

This discography is concerned with only those recordings made for commercial issue to the public. It excludes the thousands of recordings made by Bing Crosby for radio, television, film soundtracks, V-discs (issued to the US Armed Forces during the war), promotional and publicity discs, phonocards, flimsies (as occasionally given by magazines) and private recordings. Exceptionally there are a few instances where a recording was subsequently given a matrix number and issued commercially or a soundtrack or "live" concert was recorded for commercial issue and these have been included.

"Dubbing" is the term used to describe copies obtained by transference of the recorded signal or sound other than from the original source.

"Over-dubbing" is the process of adding voice or music to previously recorded material (e.g. an orchestra may be recorded in advance of a vocal which is later added to it).

MATRIX NUMBERS AND TAKES

Matrix numbers, usually preceded by prefix letters, were allocated by record companies to identify each separate recording. Invariably there was more than one "take" (i.e. attempt of the same recording) and each one was indicated by a letter or figure following the matrix number (e.g. DLA 1298-A and DLA 1298-E show the first and fifth takes of the same recording). Not all takes were issued to the public but many test pressings and taped copies of those that weren't do exist in private collections. Some takes were rejected through damage, mistakes during recording or technical errors but although many were destroyed some have survived. Some of the unissued and rejected takes have become valued collectors' items. Crosby, a master of the ad lib, often continued with a recording after an error had been made turning it into a humorous interlude. These, referred to as "blow ups" or "fluffs" are avidly sought although many of them are now fairly common among collectors. Among the well known ones are the following:

We're A Couple Of Soldiers (25.10.32)
Sweet Is The Word For You (5.3.37)
A Blues Serenade (8.7.38)
Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams (9.6.39)
Between 18th And 19th On Chestnut Street (15.12.39)
I Only Want A Buddy (30.12.40)
Jingle Bells (27.9.43)
You Belong To My Heart (28.1.45)
A Hundred And Sixty Acres (17.12.47)

All takes, issued, unissued and rejected, of which copies are known to exist have been included as material previously unissued does sometimes appear on unofficial releases. Different takes of the same recording are in some instances almost indistinguishable from each other and require very careful aural study; others show marked variations. The reviews describe the differences so that identification of each take can be made individually. Re-recordings, even if made at a later date, were given the same matrix number unless they were made in a different studio (e.g. Pretty Lips: 22.12.26 (Chicago); 28.2.27 (New York)).

By the mid-1950's recordings were being made on to magnetic tape instead of, as hitherto, a wax master and the technical process of tape editing and mixing was introduced. This eliminated the need for entirely new takes when only particular parts were required to be re-recorded. In such cases any figure that was shown after the matrix number refers not to

a take but to the editing and mixing in producing a composite master. It will be appreciated that unlike genuine takes the number of possible mixes is virtually infinite but issued different mixes are collected by enthusiasts in the same way; the word "take" will, therefore, be used to describe them in the reviews.

LYRICISTS AND COMPOSERS

Following the normal practice the names of lyricists are given first. (e.g. Blue Hawaii (Leo Robin; Ralph Rainger))

Where the lyrics or composition is by more than one person their names are separated by a hyphen.

(e.g. I Surrender Dear (Gordon Clifford-Bing Crosby; Harry Barris))

I Ain't Got Nobody (Roger Graham; Spencer Williams-Dave Peyton))

Where the lyrics and composition are shared the names are shown with an ampersand.

(e.g. Way Down Yonder In New Orleans (Henry Creamer & Turner Layton))

Where the credit distinction is not known the names are separated by a comma.

(e.g. You Gotta Show Me (Dudley Brooks, Nick Castle)

Where both lyrics and composition are by the same person only that one name appears

(e.g. After The Ball (Charles K Harris)

RECORDS OF DOUBTFUL AUTHENTICITY

During the early part of his career Bing Crosby featured in vocal groups in which his voice was not clearly distinguishable and reference to recording sheets was necessary to ascertain his presence. There remains some uncertainty in a few cases where the recording sheets were not available; where it was not possible, therefore, entirely to eliminate doubt the recordings have been included in the review section. Those recordings, all recorded by Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra, are:

La Golondrina (12.5.28)

Constantinople (17.5.28)
La Paloma (21.5.28)
Georgie Porgie (17.6.28)
Lonesome In The Moonlight (17.6.28)
Christmas Melodies (19.9.28)
Let's Do It (22.12.28)
Moonlight And Roses (16.10.29)

There are also a number of recordings sometime thought to have been made by Bing Crosby. They have now, however, been disproved or discarded by a consensus of informed opinion and have not been reviewed. They were recorded by Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra except were otherwise stated:

Lonely Eyes (21.12.26)
Fallen Leaf (10.2.27)
Ooh! Maybe It's You (22.8.27)
The Love Nest (10.2.28)
When (12.3.28)
Chiquita (10.6.28)
Outside (Irving Aaronson and his Commanders) (6.2.29)
Sittin' On a Rainbow (9.6.30)
Ring Dem Bells (Duke Ellington and his Orchestra (26.8.30)
You're Telling Me (26.9.32)
A Night With Paul Whiteman At The Biltmore (2.12.32)
Let 'Em Eat Cake (27.10.33)

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used in the review section:

Record Labels

Ana	-	Anahuac
Bru	-	Brunswick
Cap	-	Capitol
Colp	-	Colpix
Col	-	Columbia
Con	-	Concord
Day	-	Daybreak
De	-	Decca
Dis	-	Disneyland
Gold	-	Golden
Lib	-	Liberty
Lon	-	London
Long	-	Longines
PIP	-	P I P (Pickwick)
Pol	-	Polydor
Pro	-	Project
RCA	-	RCA Victor
Rep	-	Reprise
Un A	-	United Artists
Un N	-	United Nations
Ver	-	Verve
Vic	-	Victor
WB	-	Warner Brothers
WLSM	-	World Library Of Sacred Music

Instruments

acc	-	accompanied by
alt	-	alto saxophone
bar	-	baritone saxophone
bjo	-	banjo
bbs	-	brass bass
bs	-	bass
bsx	-	bass saxophone
cel	-	celeste
clt	-	clarinet
cmel	-	C-melody saxophone
cnt	-	cornet
dms	-	drums
flt	-	flute
gtr	-	guitar
org	-	organ
pno	-	pno
sax	-	saxophone
sbs	-	string bass
ten	-	tenor saxophone
tbn	-	trombone
tpt	-	trumpet
uke	-	ukulele
vcl	-	violoncello ('cello)
vib	-	vibraphone
vla	-	viola
vln	-	violin
voc	-	vocal
xyl	-	xylophone

THE RECORDINGS

(Part One: 1926 - 1934)

BAND PERSONNEL

During the period 1926 - 1930 the following musicians appeared in orchestras on recordings in which Bing Crosby took part. The instrumentalists on the Whiteman recordings varied from session to session and over the period the personnel of his organisation changed considerably.

Don Clark Orchestra

(Probable): Aime Reinwald, Kenneth Howard (tpts); Art Ginder, Frank Jenks (tbns); Don Clark, Dick Dickenson, Whitney Stayner, Everett McLaughlin (reeds); Howard Jackson (pno); Leonard Mojica (bjo); Carl Angelotty (bbs); Harold McDonald (dms)

Paul Whiteman Orchestra

Ted Bartell, Bix Beiderbecke, Henry Busse, Vic d'Ippolito, Harry Goldfield, Charles Margulis, Bob Mayhew, Red Nichols, Ed Pinder, Andy Secrest, Frank Siegrest (cnts; tpts)

Boyce Cullen, Tommy Dorsey, Jack Fulton, Vincent Grande, Wilbur Hall, Bill Rank (tbns)

Rupert Crozier, Bernard Daly, Jimmy Dorsey, Max Farley, Irving Friedman, Chester Hazlett, Roy Maier, Jack Mayhew, Nye Mayhew, Harold McLean, Charles Strickfadden, Frank Trumbauer (reeds) Ted Bacon, John Bowman, Kurt Dieterle, Charles Gaylord, Otto Landau, Matty Malneck, Mario Perry, Mischa Russell, Joe Venuti (strings)

Roy Bargy, Harry Barris, Bill Challis, Ferde Grofe, Lennie Hayton, Harry Perella, Tom Satterfield, Ray Turner (pnos)

Eddie Lang, Gilbert Torres (gtrs)

Mike Pingitore (bjo)

Al Armer, Steve Brown, Min Leibrook, John Sperzel, Mike Trafficante (bs)

Harold McDonald, George Marsh (dms)

Wiliam Grant Still (arranger)

Frank Trumbauer Orchestra

Bix Beiderbecke, Charles Margulis (cnts); Bill Rank (tbn); Jimmy Dorsey, Min Leibrook, Charles Strickfadden, Frank Trumbauer (reeds); Matty Malneck (vln); Tom Satterfield (pno); Eddie Lang (gtr); Hal McDonald (dms)

Sam Lanin Orchestra

Leo McConville, Manny Klein, Phil Napoleon, Bob Effros (tpts); Tommy Dorsey, Chuck Campbell (tbns); Jimmy Dorsey, Merle Johnston, Arnold Brilhart, Andy Sannella (reeds); Arthur Schutt (pno); Tony Colucci (bjo); Hank Stern, Jimmy Mullen (bbs); Vic Berton (dms)

Dorsey Brothers Orchestra

Leo McConville, Fuzzy Farrar, Phil Napoleon (tpts); Tommy Dorsey, Glenn Miller (tbns); Jimmy Dorsey, Herbert Spencer, Arnold Brilhart (reeds); Arthur Schutt (pno); Eddie Lang, Dick McDonough (gtrs); Hank Stern (bbs); Stan King (dms)

1926

After their arrival in Hollywood in the autumn of 1925 Bing Crosby and Al Rinker were helped by Al's sister, Mildred Bailey, to obtain their first engagements. They afterwards went on protracted tours of the Fanchon and Marco circuit of some thirty-five to forty stage shows in west coast and north-west theatres. They developed an individual style and were received with varying response. They were signed for the Arthur Freed - Will Morrisey show, "The Morrisey Music Hall Revue", which played in Los Angeles and San Francisco before closing at Santa Barbara. Bing and Al were then engaged by Paramount-Publix to appear at the Metropolitan Theatre, Los Angeles at the time that Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra were playing the nearby Million Dollar Theatre. Paul's attention was drawn to the duo's act and he gave them a contract under which they were to join him in Chicago when their current contract expired. They made their first record, with Don Clark and his Orchestra, before travelling to Chicago. On 15th December, 1926 Whiteman first introduced Crosby and Rinker on stage (as "a couple of lads I picked up in a Walla Walla ice-cream parlour") and one week later they made their first recording with the orchestra.

18th Oct 1926(Los Angeles)

(1) I'VE GOT THE GIRL (Walter Donaldson) Col W142785-3
Don Clark & his Los Angeles Biltmore Hotel Orchestra
Al Rinker

A lively but stereotyped performance typical of its period with a "chorus, verse, chorus, vocal, chorus" format. There are no instrumental solos, the arrangement relying upon ensemble and section playing throughout, the reeds prominent in the opening chorus and a punchy brass lead in the final chorus. Intended, no doubt, for dancing there is no variation of tempo and the undistinguished tune proceeds in a bouncy, staccato style supported by a firm rhythm section. The vocalists attempt no more than a simple harmony with their unremarkable straight-forward delivery of trite lyrics at the same unvarying pace. When the recording was first issued in the UK and in Australia it was accredited to "The Charleston Serenaders (with vocal chorus)".

Both the tune and lyrics were poor indeed for someone of Walter Donaldson's ability and not even contemporary recordings by two well-known artists of the time, Gene Austin and Nick Lucas, could prevail over the song's mediocrity. Don Clark, a saxophonist, had been a member of Paul Whiteman's orchestra before forming his own band but there is nothing in this recording to warrant any serious consideration other than its historic value. Whilst, however, it is "run of the mill" musically, as the first-ever recording by Bing Crosby it has achieved significance as the beginning of the most successful recording career in popular music. Ironically it might never have been recognised for Crosby himself had forgotten it when years later, in 1950, Edward Mello and Tom McBride produced the first published Crosby discography ("Crosby On Record: 1926-1950") which showed "Wistful And Blue" as the first. Bing's elder brother and office manager, Larry, informed the authors that there had been an earlier recording but no one could recall its title. Collectors on the West coast scoured the junk shops of Los Angeles and San Francisco and in April, 1953, after it had lain forgotten and unknown for over twenty years, "I've Got The Girl" was re-discovered. It is said that before he knew of the find Bing recalled the title thus confirming its authenticity. Only a few copies of the original "78 rpm" issues have been traced and they have become valuable collectors' items.

Curiously, in order to impart the "jazzy" sound then currently popular, the record had been issued with the tempo faster than that originally recorded. How this was achieved, however, is not at all clear: a dubbing from which to stamp the issued copies would need to have been taken from the original master - a procedure not then practised. Nevertheless,

the 1980 re-issue by the Bing Crosby Historical Society (USA) produced at the correct speed showed an improved tonal quality and further enhancement was effected by a 1984 issue on the JONZO (UK) label. The artificial speed had raised slightly the pitch of the vocalists' voices - Crosby said it made them sound like a couple of chipmunks - but the improved audibility revealed that Crosby and Rinker sang "I've got a girl" and raised doubts about the correct title but the last lines, "I've got the girl, she's just the girl for me" vindicated the title on the label.

In his 1954 autobiographical album (5 LP set) Crosby said that he had "bootlegged a couple of discs in abandoned warehouses" and in an interview with Tony Thomas ("Conversations In Hollywood (Vol 2)" LP) said that he recorded "I've Got The Girl" in a warehouse in Los Angeles "where the orchestra was set up there among the packing cases". It was a rough-and-ready but imperishable occasion.

(2) DON'T SOMEBODY NEED SOMEBODY (Abe Lyman, Fred Rose) Col W142786
Don Clark & his Los Angeles Biltmore Hotel Orchestra
Al Rinker

During mid-October, 1926 several recordings were made by Don Clark and his Orchestra. The first to include Crosby and Rinker was "I've Got The Girl" and another recording at the same session, "Don't Somebody Need Somebody", was never issued.

As the master has probably long been destroyed it has never been ascertained beyond doubt that the duo was used on it and in a letter, dated 9th May, 1963, Crosby told the author, "I'm pretty sure that Al Rinker and myself were not used on the song. However, we could have been. I could only tell if I heard it". Al Rinker's recollection was more positive and he was reported as saying that they did make the record. It seems unlikely, as they were engaged for the session, that they would have been required for only one recording and the strong likelihood is that they were used for the song.

22nd Dec 1926(Chicago)

(3) WISTFUL AND BLUE (Ruth Etting, Julian Davidson) Vic BVE 37285-4
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Al Rinker

Introductory bars by piano, saxes and trombone are followed by a cornet solo and a verse played ensemble before the vocal duet and scat chorus, ably supported by Matty Malneck (vla) and Wilbur Hall, normally a trombonist, on guitar. A piano solo and ensemble chorus conclude the recording. There is a strong bass (John Sperzel) and rhythm section throughout. The vocal is sung competently but without any special merit; Crosby's voice can be identified. The arrangement was by Malneck and Max Farley. Some LP issues show a "take 3" but it is identical to take 4.

Deposed in 1953 as being the historic first-ever Crosby recording (see "I've Got The Girl") it was the first that Bing made with Whiteman and the beginning of his association with gifted jazz musicians. Written in 1926 the song never achieved any lasting popularity although it was recorded in 1927 by its composer, singer Ruth Etting, and by the Original Memphis Five with Annette Hanshaw. Ten years later it was recorded by Glenn Miller and his Orchestra, again with no great success.

(4) PRETTY LIPS (Charles Straight; Walter Donaldson) Vic BVE 37286-1
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Al Rinker

This recording was not issued but a test pressing of the first take was found. The song was recorded again, with the same arrangement being used, on 28th February, 1927 (q.v.)

1927

This was a year in which Crosby had fluctuating fortune. The Whiteman show moved from Chicago to tour Detroit, Cleveland, Cincinatti, St Louis, Indianapolis and Buffalo in all of which towns Bing and Al were well received but when the show reached New York's Paramount Theatre they held little appeal for the audiences. Whiteman left them out of the show for a time but when he opened his "Paul Whiteman Club" on Broadway they fared better and were retained, to be given another chance on the next tour. In March, Bing made his first appearance on a Broadway stage in Charles Dillingham's production "Lucky" (featuring Mary Eaton, Joseph Santley, Richard "Skeets" Gallagher, Walter Catlett and Ruby Keeler), when Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra appeared in a New York City cabaret sequence featuring five numbers in which Bing and Al Rinker took some vocals. Unfortunately the show failed and ran for only 71 performances.

Harry Barris was signed by Whiteman who teamed him with Crosby and Rinker to form "The Rhythm Boys". The trio became very popular, with Al and Harry at two white pianos and Bing between them with drumstick and cymbals, and signed a contract independent of Whiteman with the Victor Recording Company. Crosby made steady, if unspectacular, progress for the rest of the year. In November, in Chicago, he made his first recording with Bix Beiderbecke in the orchestra. He might have made it a few days earlier, on 18th November, when Hoagy Carmichael was engaged for a piano and vocal recording with the orchestra (of his own composition, "Washboard Blues"). In case the vocal proved unsuccessful Bing learned the song ready to take over if necessary. The Carmichael effort, however, was satisfactory and Bing was not needed.

10th Feb 1927(New York)

(5) SHANGHAI DREAM MAN (Benny Davis; Harry Akst) Vic BVE 37764-4
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Charles Gaylord, Jack Fulton, Austin "Skin" Young)

Of all the Whiteman performances that belied the appellation "King Of Jazz" this must be among the foremost contenders. The sound of a gong and a pseudo Eastern-style introduction commences what is never more than a novelty number in which the percussionist has a busy time on his wood block throughout. The Oriental motif is temporarily replaced by strings and a more Occidental sound, then an abrupt return to China before a short trombone solo leads to the vocal group humming and chanting "ching-a-ling-a-hi-lo". A lead voice (probably Young) is heard singing a couple of lines before the brass section interrupts the inanities but it is soon back to the chimes and an Oriental coda predictably concluding, as the arrangement began, with the gong. The arrangement was by Ferde Grofe.

Crosby and Rinker had been engaged by Whiteman primarily as rhythm singers but for this recording they were added to the already established "sweet" trio whose voices were typical of the period. The tune itself seems to have disappeared, unrevived and unlamented.

25th Feb 1927(New York)

(6) THAT SAXOPHONE WALTZ (Julius Mingo, Berry Sisk) Vic BVE 38118-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Gaylord, Fulton, Young)

A chimes introduction and the saxophones leading the first chorus commences a strict-tempo arrangement in a well-accented waltz time. The strings are prominent in the verse, leading to a vocal chorus by the group - mostly "doodle, doodle, doodle-doo" and only a couple of lines of lyrics. The final ensemble chorus favours, inevitably, the saxes but the strings and brass are well represented. Obviously meant for dancing it is listenable if not inspired. The "sweet" trio are again joined by Crosby and Rinker and Bing's voice can be detected in the group.

28th Feb 1927(New York)

(7) PRETTY LIPS (Charles Straight; Walter Donaldson) Vic BVE 38124-1
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Al Rinker

The first chorus starts brightly with the sax section leading; a brass-led verse and guitar introduces the singers for two choruses, the second a "scat" vocal with guitar support; a sax solo follows the vocal. The brass section is tight throughout and there is sterling work by the rhythm section, with John Sperzel on bass. This, too, is more to the liking of Crosby and Rinker than any of their previous recordings and they seem to enjoy it. Their voices are clear, they sing with confidence and make a better attempt at harmony.

It is a welcome return to rhythmic duet after the group work. For whatever reason the previous effort, of 22nd December, remained unissued it proved worthwhile to try again.

3rd Mar 1927(New York)

(8) I'M COMING VIRGINIA (Will Marion Cook, Donald Heywood) Vic BVE 38135-1-2-3-4
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Al Rinker

Although four takes were recorded all were rejected. The song was recorded again on 29th April 1927.

7th Mar 1927(New York)

(9) MUDDY WATER (Jo Trent; Peter DeRose - Harry Richman) Vic BVE 38143-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

An introduction and chorus by the band offers attractive instrumental colour leading to a smoothly played verse and a vocal chorus accompanied by string bass (Al Armer). The strings take up the succeeding verse before an ensemble final chorus and quiet finish. The arrangement , by Matty Matlock, provides a rhythmic strict tempo.

Although in his autobiographical album (1954) Crosby said that "audience acceptance was something less than enthusiastic" subsequent appraisal has confirmed that this was a happy choice for his first recorded solo. For that historic reason alone it would be highly valued - Whiteman gave it to

him after being impressed by his work with the band - but, in fact, Crosby does a fine job, with original phrasing and an assurance and authority that was destined shortly to influence the whole sphere of popular singing. "Turning his toes down Dixie way" put him in the right direction and did him no harm at all. For the first time on record one could appreciate the difference in vocal texture from that usually provided by the dance band tenors of the day. The slight huskiness did not impair clarity and was, moreover, admirably suited to the lyrics. Crosby recorded the song again on 24th April, 1954 when his voice was smoother: it makes an interesting comparison with his first effort.

Written in 1926 the song, sub-titled "A Mississippi Moan", became a favourite piece with jazz and blues artists. Recordings were made by Bessie Smith, Red Nichols, Joe Venuti and Eddie Lang. One of the composers, Harry Richman, a popular singer and entertainer also recorded it and another, Peter DeRose, provided piano accompaniment to a Gene Austin recording.

29th Apr 1927(New York)

(10) I'M COMING VIRGINIA (Will Marion Cook, Donald Heywood) Vic BVE 38135-7-9
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Al Rinker

A guitar introduction (Gilbert Torres) leads straight into the Crosby vocal with continuing guitar support and after a short trombone break the band takes the verse. A baritone sax solo (Charles Strickfadden), accompanied by a sparkling, improvised cornet obbligato (Red Nichols), is followed by a vocal duo "scat" chorus backed by guitar and violin (Matty Malneck). Rounding off as it began, guitar chords play out quietly with a final "Hotch-a-cha" breathed into the microphone. (Was this the Barris contribution?)

The previous recording of this song, on 3rd March 1927, proved unsuccessful and together with this further attempt (same master number) produced at least nine takes. In the interim, however, Whiteman had engaged extra personnel and for the first time on record Crosby was heard with Red Nichols and Jimmy Dorsey. Although previous discographies have shown this recording to be the first on which Harry Barris joined Crosby and Rinker to form a vocal trio, aural examination affords no confirmation; only two voices are audible.

This is the first recording of which more than one take has been issued. The musical arrangement is the same for both but there are differences in Nichols' improvisations and in the vocal scat choruses.

Take 7: Nichols opens with a rapidly descending passage

Take 9: Nichols opens with a short burst alternating two high notes

"I'm Coming Virginia" was recorded by many artists and bands of all types and has become an enduring jazz standard.

Show: "Africana" (1927) (Ethel Waters)
Film: "The Benny Goodman Story" (Universal: 1955) (Steve Allen, Donna Reed) (Based on the life of Benny Goodman)
Film: "Mickey One" (Columbia:1965)(Warren Beatty)

(11) SIDE BY SIDE (Harry Woods) Vic BVE 38378-1-4
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Al Rinker and Harry Barris

The Max Farley up-tempo arrangement, if unexceptionable, holds interest, the high spot being Red Nichols' short trumpet break immediately preceding the vocal. Jimmy Dorsey (sax) is prominent in the final chorus. The vocal, supported by a solid bass beat (Al Armer), is very ordinary; Crosby takes a couple of solo lines and it is one of the few times he ever assumed anything like the Jolson style.

Another interesting addition to the Whiteman "family" was Harry Barris, an ebullient character, who was teamed here for the first time on record with Crosby and Rinker to form the trio that became known as "The Rhythm Boys". (Although previous discographies show that their first trio recording was "I'm Coming Virginia" aural examination offers no confirmation). After recording "Side By Side" the trio made a test pressing of a medley of songs; no details are available and the recording was not given a matrix number.

Take 1: When Nichols commences his break his fourth note is high and piercing

Take 4: Nichols plays a high second note followed by three descending notes

The song was written in 1927 and soon became popular. Although neither the tune nor lyrics are in any way outstanding it has survived as a standard item in the repertoire of innumerable duetists and double acts.

6th May 1927(New York)

(12) MISSOURI WALTZ(James Royce Shannon;Frederick Knight Logan) Vic BVE 38392
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Gaylord, Fulton, Young)

This recording was not issued but the song was recorded again on 21st September, 1927 and 9th June, 1939.

9th May 1927(New York)

(13) I'M IN LOVE AGAIN (Cole Porter) Vic BVE 38394-2-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Gaylord, Fulton, Young)

An average performance, typical of its time, with the band maintaining a brisk tempo throughout. The vocal chorus, after a short trumpet introduction (Red Nicols), includes three solo lines by Bing. A stuttering bar sax (Charles Strickfadden) is intrusive but the full orchestra plays out the final chorus.

The song, written in 1924, is anything but vintage Cole Porter and did not achieve any popularity until 1927 when several recordings of it were made. Its popularity did not last and it faded into oblivion.

The takes are almost identical but can be identified by the glissando opening to Red Nicols' short solo on take 2. The opening note is played without this effect on take 3.

Show: "Greenwich Village Follies" (1924) (Dolly Sisters, Moran & Mack (The Two Black Crows), Vincent Lopez & his Orch)
Show: "Up With The Lark" (London: 1927)

24th May 1927(New York)

(14) MAGNOLIA (B G De Sylva-Lew Brown; Ray Henderson) Vic BVE 38779-1-2
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Al Rinker and Harry Barris

This is an ordinary song flattered by the arrangement and treatment. After a short introduction the full orchestra sets the pace until the trio take the vocal in a style that must have seemed very modern and unusual in 1927. Although not yet billed as "The Rhythm Boys" their performance is typical of the style that made them popular, singing as a trio and then each taking solo lines in scat and comedy routine. Crosby takes lead voice and for the first time on a recording his name is mentioned in the "patter" lines. Reference is also made to leading film actresses Lilian Gish and Clara Bow (the "It" girl). The band plays out the final chorus with Jimmy Dorsey (sax) and Red Nicols (cnt) in good form, ably supported by Vic Berton (dms).

Take 1: Barris interrupts Bing, saying "No, Bing, we won't say you're lying"
Take 2: Barris says, "No, we won't say you're lying"

The song was written in 1927 but had no lasting success.

20th June 1927(New York)

(15) MISSISSIPPI MUD (James Cavanaugh; Harry Barris) Vic BVE 39271-2-3
I LEFT MY SUGAR STANDING IN THE RAIN (Irving Kahal; Sammy Fain)
Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys

The two recordings of this session (each comprising a combination of two songs) were the first to be issued as being by "The Rhythm Boys", indicating their growing popularity. With Barris at piano the trio continue and extend the treatment provided in "Magnolia". A rhythmic approach with humour (even if it was "corny" and including some weak puns) and the verve and enthusiasm of the trio made an impact as an original act; with scat singing, tempo changes, comedy and a clever mixing of the two songs the recording is an attractive novelty package. All the participants make the most of their lines singing together and individually but Crosby's voice is distinctive and plainly superior to those of his partners.

The takes vary in a number of places and are easy to distinguish. The following example also illustrates the simplicity of the humour.

Take 2: (Rinker) "You never realised your sugar was so refined, did you?"
Take 3: (Rinker) "You never realised she was so refined now, did you?"

An imitative version of this recording was made on 4th July, 1943 at a re-union of the Rhythm Boys. "Mississippi Mud" was recorded again by Bing Crosby on 20th January, 1928, 18th February, 1928, 24th April, 1954 and June, 1976. "I Left My Sugar" was an early composition by the highly successful Kahal-Fain partnership, an association that lasted for seventeen years until Kahal's death in 1942 and produced many outstanding hits. This song, however, was not one of them but it fitted well into the Rhythm Boys' arrangement.

("M Mud") Film: "King Of Jazz" (Universal:1930)(Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra, The Rhythm Boys)

(16) SWEET LI'L (Harry Barris) Vic BVE 39272-2-3
AIN'T SHE SWEET (Jack Yellen; Milton Ager)
Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys

The mixture as before, an entertaining interplay of two songs provided with rhythm, comedy, harmony and scat singing. It opens with Crosby suggesting that they take it at a fast tempo and although the pace varies the lyrics are at times sung very rapidly and clearly. Starting with "Sweet Li'l" the trio follows it with "Ain't She Sweet" laced with their own brand of banter and cross-talk. The final, fast scat chorus is accompanied by

cymbal tapping and Barris on piano. Barris has by now established his identity on records with the characteristic ploy of emitting a short, heavy breath directed into the microphone from very close range; an aural full-stop. There is evidence here, too, of another trade-mark for it includes Crosby's first recorded "b-b-boo", a gimmick that was short-lived but one that he made great fun of for the rest of his career.

"Sweet Li'l" (or "little" and not "Lil" as usually written) had no lasting worth but "Ain't She Sweet", written in 1927, with a catchy, simple melody line became a standard item in the repertoire of dance bands, jazz groups and popular entertainers. It has been recorded prolifically, the earlier ones including versions by Gene Austin, Eddie Cantor, Harry Richman and Fletcher Henderson and his Dixie Stompers.

The takes are easily identified by Bing's remarks early in the recording:
Take 2: "It must be fast if it's gonna be good"
Take 3: "If it's gonna be good it must be fast"

6th Jul 1927(New York)

(17) MY BLUE HEAVEN (George Whiting; Walter Donaldson) Vic BVE 39627-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Gaylord, Fulton, Young)

The arrangement, by Ferde Grofe, features a humming introduction by the group which precedes an insipid vocal by the high-pitched tenor of Jack Fulton. The orchestra follows with a couple of bars of "Rock-a-bye, Baby" leading into a verse and nicely scored chorus, a banjo break (Mike Pingitore) and good work from the brass section before the re-entrance of the vocal group to chant a "doo-doo-doo" coda. Crosby's voice is lost in the crowd and only the highly proficient musicianship saves the recording from being devoid of interest. Bing recorded the song again on 17th April, 1956.

In 1909 Irving Berlin composed a song called "My Wife's Gone To The Country (Hooray, Hooray)" the lyrics being written by George Whiting and which, it was said, were the cause of the break-up of his marriage. Eighteen years later, in 1927, he wrote "My Blue Heaven" in atonement. The song, with a variety of treatments from schmaltz to swing, became a popular favourite and was recorded prolifically by artists ranging from Artie Shaw and Glenn Miller to "Whispering" Jack Smith, the Mills Brothers and Layton and Johnstone but the big seller of the day was by Gene Austin who adopted it as his theme song.

In the film "The Five Pennies", Danny Kaye plays the role of Red Nichols upon whose life the film was based. Nichols himself played his own solos for the soundtrack. The song, "My Blue Heaven", was sung in the film by Bing's brother, Bob.

Show: "Ziegfeld Follies Of 1927" (Eddie Cantor)
Show: "Will O' The Whispers" (London: 1928) (Jack Smith)
Film: "Never A Dull Moment" (1943) (Frances Langford)
Film: "My Blue Heaven" (20th C-Fox:1950) (Betty Grable, Dan Dailey)
Film: "Love Me Or Leave Me" (MGM: 1955) (Doris Day, James Cagney) (Based upon the life of Ruth Etting)
Film: "The Five Pennies" (Paramount: 1959) (Danny Kaye) (Based upon the life of Red Nichols)

16th Aug 1927(Camden, New Jersey)

(18) THE FIVE STEP (B G De Sylva-Lew Brown; Ray Henderson) Vic BVE 39569-2-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Al Rinker and Harry Barris

The Rhythm Boys, without being credited as such, commence with a short scat opening and a chorus in which each take solo lines in turn. The orchestra follows with leads by trumpet, clarinet and violin and the trio makes a second appearance with a chorus in harmony and a couple of solo lines by each one. The orchestra resumes with a lively chorus and alt sax break (Jimmy Dorsey) before closing at a slower tempo with the strings. The well balanced arrangement by Matty Malneck is carried at a fast pace which the trio maintains in the vocal sections. The composers wrote some good songs but, alas, this was not one of their better efforts and it failed to achieve any recognition. The lyrics seem mostly to consist of counting from one to five and Al Rinker tells us that "if you can't count there's nothing to it". The trio proves that it can count up to five but there's still nothing to the song.

The takes are very similar, differing in only minor vocal inflections and in the coda in which on take 3 a clarinet is heard with high harmonic violin notes; the clarinet is absent from take 2.

Show: "Manhattan Mary" (1927) (Ed Wynn)

19th Aug 1927(Camden, New Jersey)

(19) THE CALINDA (Herman Hupfeld) Vic BVE 39575-2
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Gaylord, Fulton, Young)

The orchestra plays a chorus and verse of what may best be described

as fairground music with its whistles and whizzers and bass sax punctuation. After a fast chorus by Bing, in which he is supported by an "oohing" group, the orchestra resumes finally to come to rest with effects supplied by the Whiteman oriental workshop.

The song may have been better on-stage but it failed on record and didn't last. "Calinda" was a dance taking its name from an actual Negro dance imported by African slaves to the American continent. It is, perhaps, best known for the orchestral piece by Delius from his opera "Koanga" which was produced in 1904.

Show: "A La Carte" (1927) (Charles Irwin, Harriet Hoctor)
Show: "Clowns In Clover" (London: 1927)

20th Aug 1927(Camden, New Jersey)

(20) IT WON'T BE LONG NOW (B G De Sylva-Lew Brown; Ray Henderson)
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra — Vic BVE 39577-4-8
Al Rinker and Harry Barris

Arranged by Matty Malneck, slow introductory bars by clarinet and violin lead to a faster tempo chorus by the orchestra with trombone (Tommy Dorsey) prominent after which clarinet (Jimmy Dorsey) and violin again appear and lead to a vocal chorus by the trio in which the bridge lead is taken by Al Rinker. The best part of the recording follows with the lively trumpet of Tommy Dorsey, switched from trombone, well featured and a bar sax break (Jimmy Dorsey), the arrangement ending with a descending trumpet reminiscent of the New Orleans sound. The eight bars of bar sax in the middle of the final chorus is a rare example of Jimmy Dorsey playing that instrument. The song was flattered by Whiteman's recording; eight takes were made of which only one was issued so it couldn't have been easy. (In addition a test pressing of take 4 was found).

Take 8 is played at a faster tempo than Take 4 and after the line "Bet that knocks you for a twister", two of the trio add "Oh boy", the other coming in fractionally late with "Oh joy". Take 4 has the trio singing "Oh joy".

Other recordings were made by Billy Jones and Ernest Hare ("The Happiness Boys") and blues singer Clara Smith but to little avail. Whilst the lyrics had the artists "congratulating each other" that "happiness is round the corner and it won't be long now" it was, in fact, not long before the song, written for the Broadway show, passed into oblivion.

Show: "Manhattan Mary" (1927) (Ed Wynn)

21st Sep 1927(New York)

(21) MISSOURI WALTZ(James Royce Shannon;Frederick Knight Logan) Vic BVE 38392-7
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Gaylord, Fulton, Young)

Using the same master number as that used more than four months earlier, on 6th May, the recording was, after at least seven takes, successfully accomplished: whether all the effort was worthwhile is doubtful. A straightforward, plodding arrangement with laboured rendition aided and abetted by a relentless and unvarying banjo has little artistic importance. The vocal quintet, in which Crosby's voice merges indistinguishably, takes a monotonous "dah-di-dah-di-dah" chorus and coda. Crosby recorded the song again on 9th June, 1939.

The song was taken from an original melody procured in 1914 by John V Eppel and arranged by F K Logan; James Royce Shannon (pseudonym of James Royce) set the words. It was supposed to be the favourite tune of President Harry S Truman but as Missouri was his home state and the song is so syrupy and soporific one may be forgiven for thinking that his choice could only have been a diplomatic one. The resultant publicity, however, boosted its popularity beyond its merit; a later recording by Glenn Miller and his Orchestra made no impact.

Film: "The Story Of Irene And Vernon Castle" (RKO:1939) (Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers)

11th Nov 1927(Chicago)

(22) THAT'S GRANDMA (James Cavanaugh-Bing Crosby; Harry Barris) Vic BVE 40846-3
Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys

The recordings made on 20th June were well enough received for Whiteman to approve another "Rhythm Boys" label issue. This follows the previous formula with a mixture of scat singing, patter, harmony and rhythm with Barris at piano, this time with the emphasis on comedy. The lyrics, with which Bing assisted, mention socialite Peggy Joyce and entertainers Billy Jones and Ernest Hare ("The Happiness Boys"), Eddie Cantor, and Moran and Mack (The Two Black Crows). The style of the latter duo is imitated by the Rhythm Boys for a couple of lines. The music merely carries the words along as they expound their description of the "modern" Grandma at a party ("a Ritzy affair") where she is the "hit" and "a lively bunch of pep" who, though she is three score and ten "still retains that baby smile". After the aforementioned artists perform at the

party the Rhythm Boys demonstrate with a hot scat chorus how Grandma stole the show. A contemporary note is introduced with a reference to Grandma doing "a Lindbergh in the sky". It is a lively and attractive performance of some topical lyrics but, strangely, remained unissued until 1942.

The Rhythm Boys recorded the song again on 25th May, 1928 (unissued) and 19th June, 1928.

17th Nov 1927(Chicago)

(23) MISS ANNABELLE LEE (Sidney Clare - Harry Richman; Lew Pollack) Vic BVE 40894-2
Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys

A scat introduction to the verse and a change to slower tempo for the chorus has Bing taking the lead voice and his partners each having a couple of solo lines. The scat that follows includes an excellent short break by Crosby (a forerunner to his "Sweet Georgia Brown") which, in turn, is followed by a tuneful close harmony chorus before another scat interlude and conclusion with a too slowly drawn out title line.

The simple but catchy song, written in 1927 and first introduced and recorded by one of its composers, Harry Richman, became very popular. "Whispering" Jack Smith was another who made a successful recording and it was also recorded by innumerable dance bands.

Show: "Will O'Whispers" (London: 1928) (Jack Smith)
Film: "Gentlemen Marry Brunettes" (United Artists: 1955) (Jane Russell, Jeanne Crain, Rudy Vallee)

23rd November 1927(Chicago)

(24) CHANGES (Walter Donaldson) Vic BVE 40937-2-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grps (Crosby, Rinker, Barris)
(Gaylord, Fulton, Young)

This is a memorable recording if only for the fact that it was the first in which Bing Crosby and Bix Beiderbecke appeared together. In order, no doubt, to emphasise the basis and title of the song Whiteman employed both his "sweet" and "hot" vocal trios. The Bill Challis arrangement opens with a verse by the saxes and strings leading to the alternating vocal trios - sweet, hot, sweet - and to Crosby's well sung solo lines. All the vocal work is firmly supported by Steve Brown (bass). An emphatic entrance by

Bix (cnt) introduces a 16 bar solo backed by Brown's bass before the orchestra takes over. The recording demonstrates for the first time how Crosby's mellow tones and Beiderbecke's causticity so well complemented each other.

There is a slight difference in the takes in the way Bing sings the line, "First he changes into B" but the takes can be distinguished by the opening ascending run of Bix's solo:

Take 2: Played on seven notes (4 ascending, the 4th note twice repeated and one lower note)
Take 3: Played on six notes (4 ascending, the 4th note repeated once and one lower note)

The song is an unusual composition, based solely on key changes. There was a later recording, in 1937, by Benny Goodman and his Orchestra but little has been heard of the tune since.

Film: "Glorifying The American Girl" (Paramount:1929) (Mary Eaton, Edward Crandall and guest stars Eddie Cantor, Rudy Vallee and Florenz Ziegfeld)

25th Nov 1927(Chicago)

(25) MARY (Walter Donaldson) Vic BVE 40945-2-4
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

After the orchestra's introduction there is a fine swinging solo chorus by Henry Busse on muted trumpet with support from Steve Brown's bass before the Bix-led brass section takes over. The strings lead to and support Bing's vocal, also backed by bass, after which the strings and reeds lead into a Bix eight-bar shimmering cornet solo before the brass section, led by Bix, succeed to be followed by an excellent C-melody sax break and delightful coda by Frank Trumbauer. The arrangement, by Matty Malneck is well balanced and always interesting. Crosby, now well settled into the orchestra, gives a confident, up-tempo vocal.

There are differences in the takes in the Beiderbecke solos but the more easily distinguished feature is the way Crosby sings "Mary" in the line "Doesn't it speak of love, Mary":

Take 2: The word "Mary" is sung on four notes
Take 4: The word "Mary" is sung on five notes

The song was popular for a time, being recorded also by James Melton, an operatic tenor, Jesse Crawford (organ) and various bands but it did not become a lasting success.

1928

Whiteman gave plenty of work to Crosby, Rinker and Barris on record, on stage and at the Whiteman Club and they sang at parties and other clubs. The trio had a few minor quarrels between themselves, became irresponsible and failed to practice new material resulting in some dissatisfaction by Whiteman. When the orchestra left for a tour in the summer he booked them for a separate tour of the Keith-Orpheum vaudeville circuit and left them behind. Whiteman's recording contract with Victor was terminated and in May he commenced a new contract with Columbia. The Rhythm Boys' tour brought complaints from theatre managers about their behaviour but in September they rejoined Whiteman for a few weeks before embarking on another separate tour of variety theatres whilst the orchestra toured the southern states. On 4th December the Ziegfeld production "Whoopee" opened on Broadway featuring Eddie Cantor, Ruth Etting and George Olsen and his Orchestra. Almost immediately some friction developed between Olsen and Ziegfeld and Olsen left the show to be replaced temporarily by Whiteman and his Orchestra. Crosby, with the Rhythm Boys, appeared on a Broadway stage for the second time.

11th Jan 1928(New York)

(26) OL' MAN RIVER (Oscar Hammerstein II; Jerome Kern) Vic BVE 41607-2
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

A short violin introduction and an orchestral chorus and verse, with Beiderbecke leading the brass section, precede Crosby's vocal following which is a sweet sounding cmel sax solo by Trumbauer backed by Steve Brown's solid bass before the orchestra resumes. Crosby is required to sing a fast, rhythmic chorus and the tempo enables him to skirt the "highs" and the "lows" without obvious discomfort. Nevertheless at that time it would have been impossible for him to negotiate properly the song as Kern wrote it and even at this pace the limitation of his range was tested. The originality of his rendition, however, was successful and popular and as a result of this and his vocal on "Make Believe" (27th Jan) Paul Whiteman was encouraged to give him more solos. The composer could hardly have envisaged the sort of treatment the arranger provided and no doubt thought it something of a travesty but Bill Challis certainly kept things "rolling along".

Other recordings of the song were made by Bing Crosby on 14th July 1941, 31st December 1945, 23rd November 1955 and, from his Palladium Concert, in June 1976.

The song, anthropomorphizing the Mississippi, was written in 1927 for "Show Boat" and originated haphazardly after Oscar Hammerstein thought that a unifying song was needed to strengthen the libretto. Kern, however, said that he had too much else to do but Hammerstein suggested that he adapt the banjo music that introduces the Show-boat "Cotton Blossom" in the first act. Kern did so, slowing the tempo to produce "Ol' Man River". Based on Edna Ferber's book, the show was an outstanding artistic and commercial success and was probably the first successful adaptation of a serious novel into a stage musical. Edna Ferber at first refused permission for the book to be turned into a musical but Florenz Ziegfeld finally persuaded her after she heard Kern play "Ol Man River".

The song was recorded by Paul Robeson and practically everybody else including a modern jazz version, by Dizzy Gillespie, based upon its chord progressions ("Ol' Man Rebop"). It became an instant classic and has never been out of record catalogues. When Frank Sinatra's career suffered a serious decline in the late 1940's and early 1950's he included in his stage act a parody of the song to the effect that "Ol' Man Crosby jes' keeps rollin' along." He had, however, sung the true version in the film "Till The Clouds Roll By".

Show: "Show Boat" (1927) (Helen Morgan, Charles Winninger, Norma Terris, Edna May Oliver, Howard Marsh)

Film: "Show Boat" (Universal:1929) (Laura La Plante, Joseph Schildkraut, Alma Rubens)
Film: "Show Boat" (Universal: 1936) (Irene Dunne, Allan Jones, Paul Robeson, Charles Winninger)
Film: "Till The Clouds Roll By" (MGM:1947) (Robert Walker, Van Heflin and guest artists) (This film was based upon the life and songs of Jerome Kern)
Film: "Show Boat" (MGM:1951) (Katherine Grayson, Howard Keel, Ava Gardner, Joe E Brown)

12th Jan 1928(New York)

(27) FROM MONDAY ON (Bing Crosby; Harry Barris) Vic BVE 41612-1-3
Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys

Opening with a burst of scat singing by the trio and a verse by Barris, with interpolated spoken lines by Crosby and Rinker, the arrangement leads to a fast chorus by the trio. Al Rinker then takes a slow, plaintive chorus in which, near the end, Crosby whistles an obbligato. More scat singing by the trio and some solo lines by Barris conclude the proceedings. There is no solo by Crosby but his "b-b-boo" surfaces in the scat section. The lyrics, to which Bing contributed, lack any real worth but, in this presentation, make a fair attempt to "wash those blues away". Harry Barris, the exuberant Mickey Rooney of his day, performs in his usual lively fashion but Rinker's pallid vocal seems strangely irrelevant though obviously designed for a change of pace. Overall a cheerful effort, one in which the trio harmonise well and interesting for the fact that it includes the first recorded Crosby whistling.

The takes differ in the scat vocal and in Bing's whistling but can be most easily differentiated by the line:

Take 1: "Who was this girl you loved, boy she was a peach"
Take 3: "Who was this girl you loved, she was a peach"

Bing Crosby recorded the song again on 20th January 1928, 13th February 1928 and 28th February 1928.

20th Jan 1928(New York)

Trumbauer and a group of Whiteman musicians (including Bix Beiderbecke, Jimmy Dorsey, Matty Malneck and Eddie Lang) formed a studio group for this session. Whiteman, a man of friendly and generous disposition, placed no restriction on occasional sorties of this kind although the musicians were under contract to him.

(28) FROM MONDAY ON (Bing Crosby; Harry Barris) Okeh W40033
Frank Trumbauer & his Orchestra

This was a successive recording by Bing Crosby of the same song having recorded it only eight days previously with the Rhythm Boys. On this occasion he sang solo but the recording was not issued. It was a popular tune with musicians and Crosby recorded it again on 13th February 1928 and 28th February 1928.

(29) MISSISSIPPI MUD (James Cavanaugh; Harry Barris) Okeh W40034-A
Frank Trumbauer & his Orchestra

After a four bar introduction Bix takes four bars with the band before his solo chorus. Crosby succeeds him, opening with a scat line, backed by viola (Malneck) and guitar (Lang) with Trumbauer interpolating spoken lines in an assumed negro style. A second solo by Beiderbecke is followed by Bing taking a reprise vocal leading to a four bar coda by Bix and the band. Crosby takes the vocal easily and simply, his style and phrasing in happy accord with the subject. Bix admirers find plenty to like about this lively arrangement in which he plays an important part.

A take B master was discovered in Germany but, while being prepared for issue on the Odeon label, was damaged. Take A was used and stamped accordingly in the wax but "B" was shown on the previously printed labels which caused no little confusion among collectors.

This 1927 Barris opus proved very popular. Crosby had recorded it on 20th June 1927 and was to record it again on 18th February 1928; he referred to it as "an earthy anthem" on 24th April 1954 for his autobiographical album and recorded it yet again in June,1976. It was recorded also, over the years, by artists as diverse as the Dorsey Brothers, Dinah Shore, Dean Martin and many others including a joint effort by Bobby Darin and Johnny Mercer.

27th Jan 1928(Camden, New Jersey)

(30) MAKE BELIEVE (Oscar Hammerstein II; Jerome Kern) Vic BVE 41470-5
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

Kern's famous duet, arranged by Ferde Grofe, is given a mechanical rendering. Efficiently performed, it lacks the charm of the original conception. After the introduction and verse the first chorus is shared by sweet tenor and alto sax solos. Following another verse by the band Bing sings a

chorus rhythmically supported by Steve Brown (bass). Although, apparently, Whiteman was sufficiently impressed by this vocal and that on "Ol' Man River" (11th Jan) for him to give more solos to Crosby this was not one of the singer's better efforts. He sounds a little hoarse and some notes are strained as though, perhaps, he was suffering from a cold.

Like "Ol' Man River" this song was written in 1927 for "Show Boat". It quickly became a favourite item in the repertoire of all leading musical comedy tenors and a popular romantic duet. It was prolifically recorded including successes by Allan Jones, James Melton, Irene Dunne, Nelson Eddy, Kathryn Grayson and Howard Keel.

Show and Films: as for "Ol' Man River" (11th Jan 1928)

7th Feb 1928(Liederkranz Hall, New York)

(31) POOR BUTTERFLY (John L Golden; Raymond Hubbell) Vic BVE 41680-2
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Gaylord, Fulton, Young)

An undistinguished performance of a most tuneful composition played *spirito* but with little tempo variation. An "Oriental" introduction leads to a strings, banjo accompanied, chorus before a Jack Fulton "dah-di-dah" vocal with the rest of the group "ooh"-ing and "aah"-ing in support. The orchestra takes another chorus and a simulated Eastern sound and gong end the proceedings. Crosby's voice is lost in the group and it is the sort of arrangement, by Ferde Grofe, that the gifted jazz musicians in the orchestra must have found extremely frustrating. Release of the recording was deferred until 1932.

Among the innumerable recordings of the song were those made by Al Jolson, Duke Ellington, Russ Morgan, Deanna Durbin, Red Nichols, Benny Goodman, Fats Waller and the Mills Brothers and artists as far apart as Fritz Kreisler (vln) and Art Tatum (jazz piano). Written in 1916 as a skit on "Madam Butterfly", the opera by Puccini, the song has never lost its popularity, becoming a favourite with jazz artists. During the time of the song's early popularity, when seemingly everyone was singing and whistling the tune, someone wrote another song called "I'd Like To Catch The Guy Who Wrote "Poor Butterfly"".

Show: "The Big Show" (1916)
Film: "Thoroughly Modern Millie" (Universal:1967) (Julie Andrews, Mary Tyler Moore, Beatrice Lillie)

8th Feb 1928(Leiderkranz Hall, New York)

Vic BVE 41681-2-3
(32) THERE AIN'T NO SWEET MAN THAT'S WORTH THE SALT OF MY TEARS (Fred Fisher)
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Rinker, Barris, Gaylord, Fulton,Young)

Unwittingly or not, Paul Whiteman could have offered his musicians no better appeasement than this after the previous recording. After an attractive introduction Beiderbecke's cornet blazes the way, after which Roy Bargy (pno) introduces Bing's vocal. Singing verse and chorus , with the group in humming and scat support, he demonstrates his fine jazz inclination. A violin then precedes a bewitching sixteen bar solo by Trumbauer (cmel) followed by Bix's re-entry for a stimulating solo and brass section lead to end a magnificent arrangement by Tom Satterfield.

Differences in the takes appear in the scat vocal and the Bix solos; identification can easily be made by the vocally simulated cymbal effect (a heavy breathing into the microphone) which can be heard only on take 2 (during the vocal between the words "Oh" and "broken-hearted sisters" and between the scat vocal and the violin solo). The composer, German-born Fred Fisher, emigrated to the US in 1900 and became the subject of a film biography ("Oh, You Beautiful Doll") in 1949, seven years after his death.

13th Feb 1928(Liederkranz Hall, New York)

(33) SUNSHINE (Irving Berlin) Vic BVE 41688-2-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Gaylord, Fulton, Young)

The opening chorus, by the orchestra, includes a trombone solo and a short break by Bargy (pno) before Bing's vocal. He sings the verse and most of the chorus supported by the group ("doo-doo-doo"); the group sings the bridge lyrics. A return to the orchestra completes the recording. The whole thing is commonplace but relieved by the orchestral work in the final chorus and the attractive coda. The arrangement (Grofe) would have benefited by sweeping away some of those "cobwebs" that Crosby sings about.

A discovered test pressing of take 2 revealed it to be very similar to take 3 but can be recognised by the additional word "why" ("why, rub the injured part") in the last line.

The song is a Berlin mediocrity with no lasting value. A recording of the song was made by "Whispering" Jack Smith, accompanied by Ambrose

and his Orchestra, during a visit to England in 1928.

(34) FROM MONDAY ON (Bing Crosby; Harry Barris) Vic BVE 41689-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Gaylord, Fulton, Young)

Introduced in slow tempo by the group, with Fulton lead voice, there is an abrupt change to scat before Beiderbecke takes an impressive 32 bar solo (cnt) with the saxes in support. Bing sings a chorus, backed by the group, with a Jolson-like title phrase. The orchestra resumes with violins and a strong bass (Brown) for the Bix-led brass section to continue until the original slow tempo is repeated for the coda. The arrangement was by Matty Malneck.

Additional takes of this recording were made on 28th February (q.v.)

Crosby first recorded this song, with the Rhythm Boys, on 12th January 1928 and again on 20th January with Frank Trumbauer's Orchestra.

18th Feb 1928(Liederkranz Hall, New York)

(35) MISSISSIPPI MUD (James Cavanaugh; Harry Barris) Vic BVE 41696-2-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Irene Taylor
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Barris, Gaylord, Fulton,Young)

Bing, with the group, sings a couple of lines of introduction before Barris launches into scat. Solos by Beiderbecke (cnt) and Izzy Friedman (clt) with Brown's bass precede Irene Taylor's vocal with group support. Bing has a couple of solo lines and there is more Barris scat before Irene Taylor again takes up the vocal. Bix and Friedman briefly re-appear, there are a couple of bars from Trumbauer (sax) and the band leads to Irene Taylor's finish. Although Crosby has no chance of prominence the soloists, vocal and instrumental, all give excellent performances in the Satterfield arrangement. Although the singing cannot in any way be considered a duet it is the first recording on which Crosby appeared with a female vocalist.

The takes show differences in the solos by Beiderbecke and Friedman and in the scat vocal, particularly by Barris but they can be more readily identified when Irene Taylor sings for the second time the words "what a dance":

Take 2: The word "a" is sung on a higher note than the other two words
Take 3: The three words are sung on the same note

Crosby had previously recorded the song on 20th June 1927 and 20th

January 1928 and recorded it again on 24th April 1954 and in June, 1976.

28th Feb 1928(New York) Vic

(36) HIGH WATER (J Keirn Brennan, Marsh McCurdy) CVE 43117-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

This is one of the "concert" arrangements in which Whiteman specialized, the type of music unpopular with the jazz instrumentalists and in which normally Crosby took no part. In this Satterfield arrangement, however, he is the solo vocalist. The orchestra, in pretentious "symphonic" style, includes some Bargy piano arpeggios before the vocal. Singing in a more tenor-like quality than usual Bing sings the first part straight before lapsing into spoken lines, *a la* Jolson, resuming the singing more rhythmically, with clarinet obbligato and bass support, and sounding a little more comfortable. His overuse of an additional note to prolong some of the vowels ("ro-oll", "hi-igh", "so-oul") spoils an otherwise acceptable performance.

Some issues of the recording were labelled "High Water (A Spiritual)". Some copies were pressed in Australia as "take 11" but were a dubbing of take 3.

(37) FROM MONDAY ON (Bing Crosby; Harry Barris) Vic BVE 41689-4-6
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Gaylord, Fulton, Young)

These were more takes of the splendid recording made on 13th February (q.v.) when three takes were made. Differences in the three takes issued occur in the Bix solos, in Fulton's solo line "All my cares are gone away" and in the last line of Bing's vocal:

Take 3: Fulton sings the last word, "away", by descending to a low note
Takes 4 & 6: "away" ascends to a high note
Takes 3 & 6: Bing sings " 'cause I'll be happy from Monday on"
Take 4: Bing omits the word " 'cause"

Crosby had originally recorded the song, with the Rhythm Boys on 12th January 1928 and recorded it again with Frank Trumbauer's Orchestra on 20th January 1928.

1st Mar 1928(New York)

(38) WHAT PRICE LYRICS (Bing Crosby-Harry Barris;Matty Malneck - Harry Barris) Vic BVE 43121-1-3
Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys)
with Matty Malneck (vla)

The valid proposition that many a good tune is spoiled by poor lyrics is made here with apposite lyrics and a poor tune. Bing tells his friends that he is in a "frightful predicament", having a beautiful melody but no lyrics. He suggests some cliche rhymes ("moon-June", "true-blue" etc and the deliciously excruciating "I'll have to take Sammy to his Kentucky Mammy"). Al and Harry very properly advise with, exhortatory examples, that he substitute scat for the worthless phrases. Apparently Bing accepts the advice as he joins his colleagues in a scat-singing conclusion. The Rhythm Boys, all of whose names are mentioned, are accompanied as usual by Barris (pno) and also by co-composer Malneck (vla). Whilst the trio takes a breather there is a short viola and ukulele duet; the uke player is probably Barris but it could possibly have been Crosby or Rinker doing the strumming.

The takes can be recognised in the variation of the following spoken line early in the recording:

Take 1: "Can't you do something for it?"
Take 3: "Can't you take something for it?"

12th Mar 1928(Liederkranz Hall, New York)

(39) I'M WINGIN' HOME (Danee Russell, Henry H Tobias) Vic BVE 43140-2-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Gaylord, Fulton, Young)

An orchestral chorus is followed by a verse and second chorus with better instrumental colouration that includes a bass clarinet solo with the brass in strong support. Crosby then sings a half chorus with the group humming before they reverse roles for the bridge, Bing scat singing in the background. The vocal is completed as it began with soloist and humming for the last eight bars; the orchestra plays out the final chorus. Neither the song nor the recording, arrangement by Tom Satterfield, was in any way noteworthy and both were soon forgotten.

The takes are hardly distinguishable from each other but the final chord of take 2 is played forte and on take 3 is played mezzo-forte.

14th Mar 1928(Liederkranz Hall, New York)

(40) METROPOLIS (Part 3) (Ferde Grofe) Vic CVE 43143-3-4
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Gaylord, Fulton, Young, Boyce Cullen)

This concert arrangement by the composer is part of a musical depiction of New York City that was originally issued in four parts on two 12" 78 rpm records. Subtitled "A Blue Fantasie" it was entirely instrumental other than for a brief interlude by the group humming and "doo-doo-doo"-ing in Part 3 ("Incidental Singing"). After a trumpet fanfare opening a florid piano (Roy Bargy) and violin lead to the vocal section, in which Crosby's voice cannot be detected, followed by an excellent bass sax, trumpet and clarinet passage and orchestral "city traffic sounds" terminating in a crash chord. Grofe based his composition on themes by Matty Malneck and Harry Barris and Whiteman spent $5,000 on its presentation.

The takes are virtually identical, the only detectable difference being midway through, after the humming vocal, when the second trumpet note on take 3 seems to be slightly off-key and played sharp.

15th Mar 1928(Liederkranz Hall, New York)

(41) LOVABLE (Ralph Holmes-Seymour Simons; Richard A Whiting) Vic BVE 43145-1
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

A most attractive performance of an undistinguished tune that features the orchestra in lively mood, a worthy contribution from Min Leibrook (bsx) and a striking 32 bar tenor sax solo (Izzy Friedman) with strong bass and rhythm support. Crosby's relaxed vocal, with similar backing, flatters the song and an unmemorable 8 bars from Beiderbecke (cnt) lead to the fade-out. The arrangement was by Bill Challis.

Although the recording was issued in the UK in 1928 it was not until 1941 that it was issued, on a Paul Whiteman Souvenir Album, in the USA.

Issues stamped as "2R" were not take 2 but a dubbing of take 1.

The song is different from that of the same title, written by Gus Kahn and Harry Woods, sung by Crosby in the Mack Sennett film "Sing, Bing, Sing" (1931) and which he never recorded commercially.

16th March 1928(Liederkranz Hall, New York)

(42) MARCH OF THE MUSKETEERS (Clifford Grey - P G Wodehouse; Rudolf Friml) Vic BVE 43148-1
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Gaylord, Fulton, Young, Cullen)

The orchestra, playing vigorously, and the vocalists, Crosby with a solo verse and the group en-masse for the gallant chorus, seem ill-at-ease with a dull tune in an unexceptionable arrangement by Tom Satterfield. It is difficult to understand why Whiteman chose to record this unsuitable item as it had little meaning outside its original context. Written for a bigger voice than Crosby's (Dennis King was D'Artagnan) it no doubt fully served its purpose on stage as a "rouser" in the "Stouthearted Men" and "Riff Song" genre.

The song was written in 1928 for the Broadway show, a musical version of the Alexander Dumas story. The show, with P G Wodehouse collaborating on the lyrics before turning his full attention to literature, was Friml's last success.

Show: "The Three Musketeers" (1928) (Dennis King, Douglas Dumbrille, Vivienne Segal)

21st April 1928(Liederkranz Hall, New York)

(43) I'M AFRAID OF YOU (Eddie Davis - Lew Daly; Archie Gottler) Vic BVE 43660-3-4
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

I'm afraid that the less said about this song, the better. The Satterfield straight-forward arrangement is routinely handled by the orchestra with sweet sax solos by Charles Strickfaden and Chet Hazlett. Bing's accomplished solo of trite lyrics is marred a little by his phrasing in the bridge section.

The takes differ on the line "You're too good to be true":

Take 2: "True" is sung on two notes

Take 3: "True" is sung on one note

Although chosen by "Whispering" Jack Smith for one of his recordings with Ambrose and his Orchestra when he visited England in 1928, the song was soon forgotten.

22nd April 1928(Liederkranz Hall, New York)

(44) MY PET (Jack Yellen; Milton Ager) Vic BVE 43662-1-2-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Gaylord, Young)

Ignore the lyrics and the archaic expression upon which they are based. The catchy tune is presented in an attractive package from Beiderbecke's 8 bar introduction (cnt) to the coda. A fine arrangement by Bill Challis swings along brightly. Following the first chorus, with a charming sax solo for the bridge, Bix leads the brass section through a verse to the vocal chorus in which the group sound happy and relaxed; even the commonplace lyrics cannot impair the freshness and Bing provides a short, well constructed scat break. Beiderbecke again leads the brass in the final chorus until Trumbauer, with his usually delightful solo (cmel), takes the bridge.

Take 1 is easily identified by Bing's interpolation of spoken phrases during his scat lines. On the other two takes he uses only scat, the phrases of which differ on each take.

The tune became popular as a rhythmic number and was recorded by several bands during 1928 including those of Frank Trumbauer and Fred Elizalde and also by Sophie Tucker.

(45) IT WAS THE DAWN OF LOVE (Lou Davis; J Fred Coots) Viv BVE 43663-1-2-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Gaylord, Young)

A not unattractive, easy-paced interpretation of a Satterfield arrangement. Opening with orchestra and tinkling piano a first chorus, with sax prominent, and verse lead to a second chorus with a Roy Bargy - Lennie Hayton piano duet that is succeeded by the strings section. It is all so genteel and "Palm Court" that one may unhesitatingly allow a maiden aunt to listen. Bing solos the first half of the chorus, the group takes over for the middle section and Bing returns to finish it. He also whistles a couple of lines in the final chorus (his only recorded effort since 12th January ("From Monday On")) and sings the last line. A solo piano provides an 8 bar coda.

The limited range of the melody line - it was not the best of J Fred Coots' compositions - requires no great effort on anyone's part but dreadful lines such as "While stars peeped above, my poor heart just stood still" must have been an ordeal.

The takes differ in the saxophone phrasing of the opening line of the first chorus.

(46) DANCING SHADOWS (Ernie Golden) Vic BVE 43664-1
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Gaylord, Young)

The orchestra and piano introduce what at first is a piece reminiscent of Felix Arndt's "Nola" but then quickly degenerates into a repetition of unimaginative phrases relieved only slightly by short breaks by Trumbauer (sax) and Bill Rank (tbn). The arrangement, by Satterfield, includes a few bars by the group softly "ooh-ooh"-ing in the background.

Did Ernie Golden write anything else or was this a combined debut and valediction? Sometimes Whiteman's choice of material was difficult to understand.

Some issues of the recording were stamped "2R" but were a dubbing of take 1.

23rd Apr 1928(Liederkranz Hall, New York)

(47) LOUISIANA (Andy Razaf - Bob Schafer; J C Johnson) Vic BVE 43667-1-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Gaylord, Fulton, Young)

A slow eight bars introduction with a couple of dirge-like chords leads to a brisk chorus in which the reed and brass sections alternate. Friedman (clt), in front of the Bix-led brass, features an attractive verse preceding Bing's solo with the group simulating instrumental support. Beiderbecke provides a derby-muted solo (cnt) for the first half of the next chorus that the orchestra plays out to a slower-tempo coda. The mute tends to stifle the pungency of Bix's sound but the phrasing and delivery are impeccable. Crosby, now so much at ease with this type of material, makes light and satisfying work of his contribution to the Bill Challis arrangement.

The first line of the vocal, "Louisiana, Louisiana, I've been sad" reveals a difference in the takes:

Take 1: "sad" is sung on a lower note than "I've been"
Take 3: "I've been sad" sung on the same note

The lyrics, of the "I'm going back to ..." order (add whichever State you prefer), were written by Razaf before his collaboration with "Fats" Waller produced many of the most successful items in the Waller repertoire. His real name was Andreamenentania Razafinkeriefo which, he said, he had never seen misspelled because so much attention had to be given when it was proof-read. He was the nephew of the last Queen of Madagascar, Ranavadona III.

24th Apr 1928(Liederkranz Hall, New York)

This should have been Paul Whiteman's last recording session for Victor before taking up his new contract with Columbia. After the recordings a quarrel ensued when Henry Busse expressed his resentment at being given few solos; tempers flared and after heated exchanges with Paul both Busse and Hal McDonald were dismissed and Whiteman brought the session to an end. The orchestra was re-assembled the following day to make the final recording of the Victor contract.

(48) GRIEVING (Wayland Aztell) Vic BVE 43668-2
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Charles Gaylord
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Gaylord, Fulton)

Most of the first chorus is led by the reeds section taking the melody line and after a verse by the orchestra a further chorus, with a dulcet clarinet to the fore - the strings provide a break for the bridge - leads to Gaylord's vocal. Another chorus from the orchestra and the group reprise the last four lines as a coda.

The Satterfield arrangement of this not untuneful waltz has plenty of musical cliches and obviates any need for the listener to take valium. Gaylord's vocal is dated and typical of its time but with these lyrics he is more to be pitied than censured. His "poor heart was breaking" and he was "longing to die"; such banality could only expedite the demise of the song.

(49) DO I HEAR YOU SAYING (Lorenz Hart; Richard Rodgers) Vic BVE 43669-2
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Gaylord)

This, the first appearance of the eminent composers in the Crosby discography, is non-vintage material. Nevertheless there are attractive phrases in the Satterfield arrangement, the orchestra performs well within its considerable ability, the harmonious vocal is well taken by the group and a 32 bar solo by Frank Trumbauer (sax) is, if not inspired, easy on the ear.

The song was written for the 1928 Broadway show.

Show: "Present Arms" (1928) (Charles King, Joyce Barbour, Busby Berkeley)

25th Apr 1928(Liederkranz Hall, New York)

Following the unfortunate events of the previous day the orchestra, minus Busse and McDonald, was re-convened to fulfill the last item of Whiteman's Victor contract. The replacements for the two men were Harry Goldfield (tpt) and George Marsh (dms).

(50) YOU TOOK ADVANTAGE OF ME (Lorenz Hart; Richard Rodgers) Vic BVE 43670-1
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Gaylord, Fulton, Young)

Another Tom Satterfield arrangement of another song written for the same Broadway show as the previous recording. Although much more tuneful there is nothing in the opening orchestral chorus and verse that suggests anything special but when Beiderbecke (cnt) and Trumbauer (alt) enter they illuminate the scene with their brilliant "chase" chorus, a wondrously improvised duet full of exuberant, joyous phrases. A competent and assured Crosby vocal, supported by soft, background humming, sustains the happy mood. A return to the orchestra for a last half-chorus concludes the recording.

Although some issues indicated a take 2 it was but a slightly faster dubbing of take 1.

A special flexible 7" disc of the recording was pressed by RCA-Victor for the Colgate Palmolive Company to advertise "Halo" shampoo. It was given away by the Company in exchange for a label taken from their product.

The song was recorded again by Bing Crosby on 12th June, 1947 but was not issued.

Hart's lyrics, making clever use of familiar metaphors, were designed for stage presentation (it was originally sung by Joyce Barbour and Busby Berkeley) but it became a standard item in the repertoire of many artists and was recorded by many singers and bands including Benny Goodman, Ella Fitzgerald, Harry James and Rosemary Clooney. In "A Star Is Born" it was sung by Judy Garland in the famous "Born In A Trunk" sequence.

Show: "Present Arms" (1928) (Charles King, Joyce Barbour, Busby Berkeley)
Show: "On Your Toes" (1954) (Elaine Stritch)
Film: "Young Man With A Horn" (Warner Bros: 1950) (Kirk Douglas, Doris Day, Hoagy Carmichael) (Based loosely upon the life of Bix Beiderbecke) (UK title: "Young Man Of Music")
Film: "A Star Is Born" (Warner Bros:1954) (Judy Garland, James Mason)

12th May 1928(New York)

On 1st May 1928 Paul Whiteman commenced a new contract with Columbia and this was his first session under that contract. Stricter control over the material to be recorded was to be exercised by Columbia and there was to be less jazz content in the selections.

(51) LA PALOMA (The Dove) (Anon; Sebastian Yradier) Col W 98533-2
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (unconfirmed)

The three takes of the recording made at this session were rejected but a test pressing of take 2 survives. Further takes were recorded on 21st May, 1928 (q.v.)

(52) LA GOLONDRINA (The Swallow) (Narcisco Serradell) Col W 98534-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (unconfirmed)

This recording is another that must be regarded as a doubtful "Crosby". Indeed some authorities claim that there is no vocal group and that the doubtful passage is entirely a background instrumental effect. However, even if it is vocal it is impossible, aurally, to confirm his presence. The concert arrangement of this Latin-American evergreen was by Ferde Grofe and the disputed "vocal" is included in the first chorus. Various instruments in turn lead the ensemble and the piece seems to change character for the final chorus with a sax solo and guitars before a return to the original mood and a pretentious finale. Composed as a descriptive poem about the hesitancy of a swallow before migration it is set to an attractive tune.

13th May 1928(New York)

(53) EVENING STAR (Roy Turk; Fred E Ahlert) Col W 146250
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp

Takes recorded at this session were rejected but further takes were recorded on 21st May, 1928 (q.v.)

17th May 1928(New York)

(54) C-O-N-S-T-A-N-T-I-N-O-P-L-E (Harry Carlton) Col W 146291-2-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Probably Rinker,Barris,Gaylord,Fulton,Young)

It has never been fully established that Crosby was in the vocal group and the probability is that he was not and that those shown above were. The Tom Satterfield arrangement of this English novelty item, written in 1928 in Music Hall tradition, presents the orchestra as support to what is virtually an all vocal recording. It is most unlikely that if Crosby had been present his voice would not have been recognised.

The song, with its tongue-twisting spelling lesson, was very popular in its day but has long been forgotten other than as a museum piece.

The takes are difficult to distinguish and require careful listening. Midway through the recording Austin Young says, "Ha Ha Ha H-Harry" on take 2; on the other take there is no hesitation on the last word.

21st May 1928(New York)

(55) LA PALOMA (The Dove) (Anon; Sebastian Yradier) Col W 98533-6
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (unconfirmed)

Crosby's presence on this recording has never been proved and, as with "La Golondrina", the "vocal" is regarded by some as being non-existent and that the effect is produced by wind instruments. The concert arrangement, by Grofe, of this durable Latin American descriptive piece includes the doubtful vocal in the second chorus after a guitar solo. The melodious air is repeated several times with tempo variations; the third chorus is the liveliest with its trumpet lead but there is nothing here that need intrude upon an interesting conversation.

Of the takes previously recorded, on 12th May, a test pressing of take 2 exists and it can be identified by its introduction with a five note phrase that on take 6 becomes a four note phrase. The castanets in this introduction are more prominent on take 6.

The song was copyrighted in the USA in 1877 but was first published in Paris before that date.

Film: "King Of Jazz" (Universal:1930) (Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra, Rhythm Boys)

"King Of Jazz" was the film that introduced Paul Whiteman to the screen and "La Paloma" was featured in the "Monterey" sequence.

(56) EVENING STAR (Roy Turk; Fred E Ahlert) Col W 146250-6
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Gaylord, Fulton, Young)

Unissued takes had been recorded on 13th May. After a first chorus, a verse and second chorus that introduce some stuttering trumpet chords, lead to the vocal by the group with Bing soloing the bridge in this Satterfield arrangement. The vocal group are probably as shown but there is some doubt. It seems, according to the insipid lyrics, that they had all either suffered a sex change or joined the Mounties as they are seeking celestial help to find their man. For good measure Bing tells us that "life is an empty shell without him". As Whiteman had no female singer one wonders why he bothered to record a song that made such nonsense.

Turk and Ahlert were destined to become the writers of Bing's signature tune, "Where The Blue Of The Night". They were very successful composers and had several hit songs but this was not among them. It was also recorded in 1928 by Irving Aaronson and his Commanders but it achieved little success.

(57) 'TAIN'T SO, HONEY, 'TAIN'T SO (Willard Robison) Col W 146316
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

The four takes recorded at this session were rejected. Further takes were recorded on 23rd May and 10th June. (q.v.)

22nd May 1928(New York)

(58) GET OUT AND GET UNDER THE MOON (Charles Tobias - William Jerome; Larry Shay)
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra Col W 146319-3
Voc grp (Crosby, Gaylord, Fulton, Young)

The orchestra plays a chorus and verse with the next chorus mostly taken by a muted trumpet solo; there follows a Crosby vocal backed by the humming group and another chorus by the orchestra with the group

singing the bridge. The Satterfield arrangement provides instrumental variation and Bing adds to the fun with an excellent rendering of some philosophical advice in this happy, catchy tune with particularly good phrasing in the last stanza.

The song was written in 1928 and became one of the biggest hits of the year. Its ephemeral popularity was assisted by recordings made by Helen Kane, the "boop-boop-a-doop" girl, Annette Hanshaw and G H Elliott who made it a feature of his stage act.

Col W 146320

(59) I'D RATHER CRY OVER YOU (Jack Yellen, Phil Ponce, Dan Dougherty)
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grps (Crosby, Rinker, Barris) (Gaylord, Fulton, Young)

The three takes recorded at this session were rejected but further takes were recorded on 10th June, 1928 (q.v.)

23rd May 1928(New York)

(60) 'TAIN'T SO, HONEY, 'TAIN'T SO (Willard Robison) Col W 146316
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

Unissued takes had been recorded on 21st May and this second attempt proved no more successful. Further recordings were made on 10th June, 1928 (q.v.)

25th May 1928(New York)

(61) WA DA DA (James Cavanaugh; Harry Barris) Col W 146336
Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys

None of the takes from this session was issued but the trio recorded it again on 19th June, 1928 (q.v.)

(62) THAT'S GRANDMA (James Cavanaugh-Bing Crosby; Harry Barris) Col W 146344
Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys

An unfruitful session for the Rhythm Boys; none of the takes was issued but it was recorded again on 19th June, 1928 (q.v.). It had been

previously recorded by them on 11th November, 1927.

10th June 1928(New York)

(63) 'TAIN'T SO, HONEY, 'TAIN'T SO (Willard Robison) Col W 146316-9
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

Following the unsuccessful attempts made on 21st and 23rd May, Whiteman decided to try again much to the chagrin of the musicians. Bix had fluffed some solo entries and Bing, who came in with the orchestra on the first note, experienced some difficulty, the story goes, without having an introductory chord. Apparently Bill Challis, the arranger, solved the problem by producing a pitchpipe to give him his note. It could have been a joke for there were other instruments, including a piano, already available to provide the note if, indeed, it really was necessary. Bing renders a verse and chorus of the spiritual-like lyrics at a bright tempo before the orchestra takes over for a chorus, verse and another chorus that brakes to a halt. Beiderbecke's 16 bar solo illuminates the verse and Trumbauer provides unusual variety with a bassoon solo for the first half of the final chorus. The arrangement is interesting with its punchy brass passages and Crosby sounds easy enough with this sort of number.

From a total of ten takes, recorded at three sessions, one was finally selected for issue - much, one imagines, to the relief of the entire assembly.

Col W 146320-5

(64) I'D RATHER CRY OVER YOU (Jack Yellen, Phil Ponce, Dan Dougherty)
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grps (Crosby, Rinker, Barris) (Gaylord, Fulton, Young)

A Harry James-like trumpet introduction leads to a chorus by the orchestra with a mostly string section lead and thence to the vocal. The "sweet" trio sings the verse to be superseded in a rather abrupt change of mood by the rhythm trio in the chorus, a Bing solo with his two buddies giving vocal and moral support. A final chorus by the orchestra, featuring short solos by Trumbauer (sax), Bix (cnt) and possibly Friedman (clt), terminates the tasteful Challis arrangement with a "Harry James" coda. A vocal in which the lyrics suggest a measure of melancholy is treated with little suffering and even less effort by the rhythm trio.

Unissued takes had been recorded previously on 22nd May.

17th June 1928(New York)

Col W 146541-3

(65) I'M ON THE CREST OF A WAVE (B G De Sylva-Lew Brown; Ray Henderson)
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Gaylord, Fulton, Young)

Musical scales simulating waves precede a verse by Crosby and a chorus in which he is given the support of his vocal cohorts. A lively orchestral chorus and "waves on the shore" follow before the vocalists return with a roundelay of the title line in mounting scale for the breakers. The last chorus includes an inviting saxophone solo and the slower tempo coda must mean that the tide is ebbing.

Everyone is up to his neck in water and when we hear "shh-shh-shh" things get very moist indeed. Bing asks, "Do I seem to effervesce?" and the sea of sibilation spreads to "oceans of kisses". The arrangement, riding the troughs, is hackneyed and obvious, the group behind Bing sound in pain ("ooh-ooh") and it shouldn't succeed but the sprightly tune sails jauntily along as it surf-rides the rollers and everyone has fun. It should, however, come with a warning to non-swimmers that it might damage their health.

Introduced in the 1928 show by Harry Richman, who also successfully recorded it, the song, although the hit of the show, had no lasting value. It was also recorded by Joe Venuti.

Show: "George White's Scandals Of 1928" (Harry Richman, Ann Pennington)

(66) THAT'S MY WEAKNESS NOW (Bud Green; Sam H Stept) Col W 146542-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Barris)

Opening with an introductory "sign on" by the soloists the first chorus is led by the reeds with a Bill Rank solo (tbn) in the bridge; a verse by the orchestra with short instrumental and scat vocal phrases is succeeded by a vocal chorus with rhythm section support. A "Demande et Response" chase chorus follows in which the trio sings the first line of each stanza to be "answered" in turn by Friedman (clt), Beiderbecke (cnt), Rank (tbn) and Trumbauer (sax). Another lively, modulated chorus, a two-line vocal and cymbal crash end the proceedings. The Bill Challis arrangement is witty, the instrumental statements precise and the vocal is handled neatly as the boys relate their enervating experience.

This 1928 song became immensely popular and was prolifically recorded.

Amongst those who did so were Helen Kane (the "boop-boop-a-doop" girl), Jack Hylton, Cliff Edwards ("Ukulele Ike") and "Whispering" Jack Smith with Carroll Gibbons and his Orchestra.

(67) GEORGIE PORGIE (Gerald Paul; Billy Mayerl) Col W 146543-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp

It is doubtful whether Bing Crosby took any part in this recording and the identity of the members of the vocal group is uncertain. Gaylord, Fulton and Young were probably members of the group and possibly Crosby but there is no definite aural evidence of his presence.

Perhaps the less said about this recording, the better; a pedestrian effort in which nobody seems to have much belief. Not even short solos by Trumbauer and Beiderbecke after the vocal chorus can redeem it. In lyrics that it would be charitable to call "uninspired" the male trio (or quartet) are wishing that Georgie Porgie would kiss them. It isn't on record whether or not he did so but the quick demise of the song mercifully precluded any further osculatory practices.

(68) LONESOME IN THE MOONLIGHT (Benee Russell; Abel Baer) Col W 146546-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Probably Crosby, Fulton, Young)

This is yet another recording on which doubt is cast about its being an authentic Crosby for the voices are unidentifiable. It starts and finishes with a few chords of "Moonlight And Roses" but the whole performance is lack-lustre apart, perhaps, from the baritone sax occasionally asserting its presence. The "vocal" consists of wordless "bom-bom-bom"-ing in a guitar-like sound. The arrangement was by Ferde Grofe.

18th June 1928(New York)

Col W 146549-2

(69) BECAUSE MY BABY DON'T MEAN "MAYBE" NOW (Walter Donaldson)
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Gaylord, Fulton, Young)

Brief violin and trumpet solos introduce the recording and the tempo then picks up for a chorus by the orchestra with brass to the fore and the

reeds section leading in the bridge. A second chorus allows Bix (cnt) to solo to the bridge, which is taken by a violin, before he returns to the attack; a verse with a sax solo then precedes the vocal by Bing backed by the group. The brass section leads the play-out chorus to a slower tempo violin and trumpet coda as it began. The bright Crosby vocal is well within the compass of his widening experience and he effortlessly introduces scat phrases at the end of each stanza without dropping a stitch. His tone ideally complements Beiderbecke's cornet and even if the latter's solo is not his most inventive it is nonetheless welcome. All in all a nice toe-tapping arrangement by Bill Challis.

(70) OUT OF TOWN GAL (Walter Donaldson) Col W 146550-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Barris)

The first chorus, with a Charles Strickfadden solo (bar) middle section, is followed by the vocal trio verse and chorus (separated by a short scat phrase) and a final chorus by the orchestra. It is no more than hack composing with little tune and matching lyrics. The trio sing well enough and the final chorus is punched out with enthusiasm by the brass, trombone and Beiderbecke's eight bars solo but it is not enough to save this mediocrity from oblivion. The gal might just as well stay out of town for what the song is worth.

19th June 1928(New York)

(71) WA DA DA (James Cavanaugh; Harry Barris) Col W 146336-6
Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys

Previous takes, unissued, had been recorded on 25th May. Opening with a few chords by Barris (pno) the trio, with Crosby at his post on cymbals, serves up its usual dish of scat and simple lyrics, this time with little relish. The song, rhythmic but almost tuneless, recommends that we "shake out the blues", informs that "everybody's doing it now" and suggests that the President should "Wa Da Da". It has no intrinsic worth.

The tune was recorded shortly afterwards by Bix Beiderbecke and his Gang, a small group of Whiteman musicians, with little success.

(72) THAT'S GRANDMA (James Cavanaugh-Bing Crosby; Harry Barris) Col W 146344-6
Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys

Unissued takes of this recording had been made on 25th May. It had been previously recorded by the trio on 11th November, 1927 for Victor (q.v.). This was an inferior and rather stale repetition, lacking the crispness of the earlier version but identical in general arrangement. It was, presumably, re-recorded because the Victor version had not then been issued and it held a pecuniary interest for its composers.

19 Sep 1928(New York)

This session, arranged for the recording of seasonal music for the forthcoming Christmas and well in advance of the event, was not one welcomed by the musicians but they performed with the usual Whiteman polish and professionalism. Eddie King, the recording director, himself provided organ and sleigh bell effects. The recordings were originally issued on either side of a 12" 78 rpm record.

(73) CHRISTMAS MELODIES (Part 1) (Silent Night, Holy Night) Col W 98585-3
(Joseph Mohr; Franz Xavier Gruber)
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Probably Crosby, Gaylord, Fulton, Young)

The lovely carol is played *andante* even a little dolefully. The Bill Challis arrangement opens with chimes (church bells) and an orchestral chorus; a second chorus in which the orchestra is led by the strings with harp obbligato is followed by the group humming a chorus, unaccompanied. A final chorus, with chimes and trumpet lead concludes with the church bells. Although it is not possible to identify the voices it is generally accepted that Crosby was in the group. Whether he was or not there are six subsequent recordings by him of the carol, on 21st February 1935, 13th November 1935 (q.v.), 8th June 1942, 19th March 1947, 3rd May 1954 and 24th December 1955.

(74) CHRISTMAS MELODIES (Part 2) Col W 98586-3
(O Holy Night)(John Sullivan Dwight; Adolphe Charles Adam)
(Adeste Fidelis)(Canon Frederick Oakley-Francis Wade;Trad)
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Probably Crosby, Gaylord, Fulton, Young)

Chimes, sleigh bells and organ introduce "Adeste Fidelis" before the humming group, accompanied by a harp, follow with a half-chorus of "O Holy Night"; the orchestra continues until the group and harp re-appear. There is a brief harp solo before the orchestra returns to "Adeste Fidelis" and an organ coda. The arrangement was by Ferde Grofe, "Adeste Fidelis" being entirely instrumental. The composition of the group is again doubtful but that shown above is likely.

"O Holy Night", a French carol, is shown incorrectly as "Noel" on some issues of the recording. Crosby recorded it on 5th October 1962 (q.v.).

10th Nov 1928(Chicago)

(75) MY SUPPRESSED DESIRE (Ned Miller; Chester Cohn) Col W 147500-3
Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys

A slow scat start gradually increases tempo with Barris and Rinker each speaking the title line. Bing takes a solo scat break and is then joined by the others before Rinker sings a verse (with Barris (pno) and Crosby (cymbals)) with Bing urging him to "tell it". The trio then sings a chorus with a Rinker solo in the bridge before they again resort to scat and comedy lines. The juvenile lyrics might well have been suppressed or Bing's advice ignored but the performance is lively and the scat singing is up to par.

Written in 1928, the song was also recorded by the orchestras of Coon-Sanders and Abe Lyman but achieved little success.

(76) RHYTHM KING (Jo Trent-Joe Hoover; J Russel Robinson) Col W 147501-3
Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys

After a piano introduction by Harry Barris, Bing sings a stylish, bluesy verse and, following scat and spoken lines by the trio, resumes his singing. After more scat, both solo and in trio, the last wailing chorus is rather a lament as they implore us, "Oh Lord, listen to the rhythm king". Crosby's verse is the best thing but, coming early, the rest of the recording doesn't

maintain the same standard.

Other recordings of the song were made by Bix Beiderbecke and his Gang (a group of Whiteman musicians) and by the Coon-Sanders Nighthawks but it was popular for only a short time.

11th Dec 1928(New York)

(77) MAKIN' WHOOPEE (Gus Kahn; Walter Donaldson) Col W 147540
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Gaylord, Fulton, Young)

None of the four takes recorded at this session was issued but further takes were recorded on 22nd December (q.v.).

14th Dec 1928(New York)

(78) LET'S DO IT (Cole Porter) Col W 147536
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Gaylord, Fulton, Young and possibly Crosby)

None of the takes was issued but it was recorded again on 22nd December (q.v.).

22nd Dec 1928(New York)

(79) LET'S DO IT (Cole Porter) Col W 147536-5
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Gaylord, Fulton, Young and possibly Crosby)

This is yet another in the "doubtful Crosby" category for the voices cannot be recognised with certainty. Unissued takes had been recorded on 14th December. The Challis arrangement in the usual format of chorus, verse, vocal chorus and orchestral chorus results in an unexceptionable performance. The first chorus is lively with a sax solo and several instruments show briefly in the verse.

Cole Porter wrote this fine, risque "list" song, with its witty, sophisticated lyrics (too well known to need any repetition) in 1928 and it has never lost its popularity. Crosby recorded it again on 26th January, 1929 and it has been recorded by countless other artists including Mary Martin, Oscar Peterson, Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, Eartha Kitt, a Buddy Clark

and Dinah Shore duet, Benny Goodman, Bunny Berigan and practically every other band. Noel Coward featured it in his act providing additional impudent verses.

Show: "Paris" (1928) (Irene Bordoni, Irving Aaronson & his Commanders)
Show: "Wake Up And Dream" (London, 1929) (Jessie Matthews, Sonnie Hale, Elsie Carlisle)
Film: "Night And Day" (Warner Bros:1946) (Cary Grant, Alexis Smith, Jane Wyman) (Based on the life of Cole Porter)
Film: "Can Can" (20th C-Fox:1960) (Frank Sinatra, Shirley Maclaine, Maurice Chevalier)
Film: "City Heat" (1984) (Clint Eastwood, Burt Reynolds)

(80) MAKIN' WHOOPEE (Gus Kahn; Walter Donaldson) W 147540-7
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Fulton, Young, Gaylord or Rinker)

Takes of this recording had been made on 11th December but were not issued. After a chorus by the orchestra Bing sings a verse and, supported by the group, the first half of the chorus; the group relieves Bing for the bridge and he resumes, again with its support, to finish the refrain. An orchestral verse led by reeds (Trumbauer on sax) and strings and a chorus featuring a short trumpet solo by Andy Secrest concludes an attractive Ferde Grofe arrangement. There is a little confusion about whether Gaylord, Rinker or possibly both are in the group but there is no doubt about Crosby's presence for his interpretation of this famous old song could hardly be improved upon in a dance band version which is not what its composers primarily intended.

Although the song is not particularly tuneful it is very cleverly written in a conversational style with sly, meaningful pauses. Kahn's humorous if cynical lyrics about the vicissitudes of married life are almost everything and perfect for individual treatment rather than for an orchestra when the outstanding verses are sadly missed. (From its opening, "When I hear that march from "Lohengrin"", by way of "Weddings make a lot of people sad, But if you're not the one it's not so bad" to the final "Whoopee", the whole piece is a perfect example of comedy lyric writing in which chorus after chorus unrolls the saga). Written in 1928 for the Broadway show it was a show-stopper for Eddie Cantor who, with his rolling eyes, excelled in his definition. It has been featured in every conceivable way from "sweet" to "swing" and been recorded by many artists and bands as varied as George Olsen, Louis Armstrong, Jack Hylton, the Gerry Mulligan Quartet and Roy Fox; from Harry Richman and Rudy Vallee to Dinah Shore,

Doris Day, Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerld and the Nat "King" Cole Trio. The original recording by Cantor was, of course, a huge success.

Show: "Whoopee" (1928) (Eddie Cantor, Ruth Etting, George Olsen and his Orchestra)
Film: "Whoopee" (Samuel Goldwyn:1930) (Eddie Cantor, Ethel Shutta, George Olsen and his Orchestra)
Film: "The Great Ziegfeld" (MGM:1936) (William Powell)
Film: "Show Business" (RKO:1944) (Eddie Cantor, Joan Davis)
Film: "I'll See You In My Dreams" (Warner Bros:1951) (Doris Day) (This film was based upon the life and songs of Gus Kahn, played by Danny Thomas; Donaldson was played by Frank Lovejoy)
Film: "The Eddie Cantor Story" (Warner Bros: 1953) (Keefe Brasselle (as Cantor)) (Soundtrack songs by Eddie Cantor)

28th Dec 1928(New York)

Taking time off from the Whiteman organisation Crosby recorded with the Ipana Troubadours, a radio and studio band that was one of Sam Lanin's many outfits and one of the first to broadcast. It took its name from the brand of toothpaste made by the sponsors of the radio programme on which the band played.

(81) I'LL GET BY (Roy Turk; Fred E Ahlert) Col W 147545-3
The Ipana Troubadours (Dir. by Sam Lanin)

After a chorus and verse by the orchestra, Crosby sings a chorus and the orchestra plays a final chorus featuring a trumpet solo. The short vocal is relaxed and well taken as Bing bravely faces any possible adversity "as long as I have you".

The title was taken from a well-used phrase of the day and the song, written in 1928, is reminiscent of Dvorak's "Humoresque". Fred Ahlert, the composer, was a qualified lawyer for whom music was a part-time occupation until the success of this song made him decide to take it up full-time. It was popular for a time and after being revived in 1944 became a standard. It was recorded by many artists including Gus Arnheim, Ruth Etting, Nick Lucas, The Ink Spots, Andy Kirk, Carroll Gibbons, Benny Goodman, Billie Holiday, Woody Herman, Dick Haymes (with Harry James' Orchestra) and Judy Garland. In the film "A Star Is Born" the song was included by Judy Garland in the famous "Born In A Trunk" sequence.

Film: "Follow The Boys" (Universal:1944) (George Raft, Vera Zorina)
Film: "A Guy Named Joe" (MGM:1944) (Spencer Tracy, Irene Dunne)
Film: "You Were Meant For Me" (20th C-Fox: 1948) (Jeanne Crain, Dan Dailey, Oscar Levant)
Film: "I'll Get By" (20th C-Fox:1950) (Gloria de Haven, June Haver, Dan Dailey, Harry James)
Film: "A Star Is Born" (Warner Bros:1954) (Judy Garland, James Mason)
Film: "The Helen Morgan Story" (Warner Bros: 1957) (Ann Blyth, Paul Newman) (Based upon the life of Helen Morgan)((UK title: "Both Ends Of The Candle")

(82) ROSE OF MANDALAY (Ted Koehler;Frank Magine) Col W 147546-3
The Ipana Troubadours (Dir. by Sam Lanin)

In the same format as the preceding song but with an eastern-flavoured arrangement, Crosby sounds uncomfortable in a short vocal with lyrics one can only imagine were never meant to be listened to ("Buddha knows I love you"). A faltering "someday", a wavering "o-o-of" and stuttered vocal endings ("a- way-ay", "pray-ay" etc) are untypical of him. The song has no more than an average tune and had a short-lived popularity.

1929

On 5th February Paul Whiteman made his first broadcast (CBS) under his contract with Old Gold Cigarettes and Crosby and the Rhythm Boys took part. On 14th March Bing made a couple of recordings that were the first on which his name appeared on the label as a solo artist. In May Eddie Lang and Joe Venuti joined the band and Lang (gtr) became Bing's on-stage accompanist. In the same month Whiteman and his whole organisation set out from New York for the West Coast on a special train, the "Old Gold - Whiteman Special" provided by his radio sponsors, to make a film, "The King Of Jazz". Playing concerts and making broadcasts at various towns en route they arrived at Los Angeles in June. During July and August the Rhythm Boys appeared, as a separate act, at the Montmartre Club and at the Orpheum Theatre, Los Angeles. Difficulties and misunderstandings about the film led to Whiteman and the band returning to New York on 28th August. During 1929 most of the recordings that Crosby made with the Whiteman orchestra were solo vocals and there was very little group work for him.

11th Jan 1929(New York)

(83) MY ANGELINE (L Wolfe Gilbert; Mabel Wayne) COL W 147751
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

None of the four takes was issued and more takes were recorded on 28th February and 7th March (q.v.).

25th Jan 1929(New York)

(84) SO THE BLUEBIRDS AND THE BLACKBIRDS GOT TOGETHER Col W 147888
Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys (Billy Moll; Harry Barris)

The takes recorded were unissued; additional takes were recorded on 10th April (q.v.).

(85) I'M CRAZY OVER YOU (Al Sherman, Al Lewis) Okeh W 401555-B
Sam Lanin & his Orchestra

The saxophone led introduction is followed by an orchestral chorus with Bob Effros (tpt)leading, and sax taking the bridge; after the orchestra plays a verse Crosby sings a chorus and the orchestra returns for a final chorus in which the sweet sounding sax section is led by Jimmy Dorsey (alt) through the bridge. It is played throughout at a relaxed tempo with plodding rhythm and Bing's dulcet vocal is restrained until the final bars when his phrasing develops a jazz inflection.

Some of the early 78 rpm records were labelled "Eddie Gordon Orchestra", "Will Perry's Orchestra" or "Sam Lanin's Famous Players And Singers".

The pleasant tune became very popular and one of its earliest recordings was by "Whispering" Jack Smith, accompanied by Carroll Gibbons and his Orchestra.

(86) SUSIANNA (Spencer Williams) Okeh W 401556-B
Sam Lanin & his Orchstra

The orchestra plunges without introduction into the first chorus with trombone lead in the bridge and trumpet lead in the last eight bars. The second chorus is taken by Bing with clarinet making patterns in the

background. After a verse by the band it continues with the final chorus in which the bridge is a splendid J Dorsey (sax) solo. Crosby's phrasing is delightful and the rhyming of "precious" with "fresh as" is taken in his stride.

Early 78 rpm discs were variously labelled "Eddie Gordon Ochestra", "Sam Lanin's Famous Players And Singers" or "Ariel Dance Orchestra".

(87) IF I HAD YOU (Ted Shapiro, Jimmy Campbell, Reg Connelly) Okeh W 401557-C
Sam Lanin & his Orchestra

The first chorus is led by Bob Effros (tpt) with Arthur Schutt (pno) relieving him for the bridge. After a verse by the band Bing sings a chorus with trumpet and piano support and the orchestra plays out a last chorus which includes an eight bars solo by Jimmy Dorsey. Despite some minor blemishes (a tiny waver on "wide", a dropped aspirate on "humble" and a slight fluff on "if" in the last line) the vocal is first rate and an indication of what the future held.

"Will Perry's Orchestra" or "Sam Lanin and his Famous Players" appeared on the labels of some of the early 78 rpm issues.

This was a very good 1928 English song that became extremely popular and, eventually, a standard. Many recordings have been made of it including those by Cliff Edwards ("Ukulele Ike"), Kate Smith, Rudy Vallee, "Whispering" Jack Smith (with Carroll Gibbons and his Orchestra), Fred Elizalde and his Music (with vocalist Al Bowlly), Jimmy Dorsey, Bob Crosby Orchestra, Benny Goodman Sextet, Ambrose, Dinah Shore Frank Sinatra, Judy Garland and The Nat "King" Cole Trio.

Film: "The Clock" (MGM:1945) (Judy Garland, Robert Walker) (UK title: "Under The Clock")
Film: "You Were Meant For Me" (20th C-Fox: 1948) (Jeanne Crain, Dan Dailey, Oscar Levant)

26th Jan 1929(New York)

For this session Bing made his first recordings with the Dorsey Brothers Orchestra.

(88) THE SPELL OF THE BLUES (Dave Dreyer - Herman Ruby; Arthur Johnston) Okeh W 401560-B
Dorsey Brothers Orchestra

The opening chorus has the trumpet well featured after which Bing sings a verse and chorus backed, for the first time on record, by Eddie Lang (gtr). The final chorus brings to the fore both Jimmy (clt) and Tommy (tbn). Although there is nothing in this likeable, Glenn Miller arranged, blues that actually casts a spell Crosby offers a competent, well-phrased vocal (despite his Jolson-like "skies") that is a genuine forerunner of the magnificent "Black Moonlight", recorded four years later.

(89) LET'S DO IT (Cole Porter) Okeh W 401561-B
Dorsey Brothers Orchestra

The introduction is followed by a chorus with a Jimmy Dorsey solo (clt) and a verse with another solo by him (alt); Crosby then takes a chorus, backed by lovely guitar chords from Lang, and in the last chorus brother Tommy (tbn) solos the bridge. The orchestra punches out Porter's phrases in its two choruses with the verse arranged in marked contrast. Bing's vocal admirably suits the mood and Glenn Miller's arrangement.

Some 78 rpm issues of the recording showed the title, incorrectly, as "Let's Fall In Love".

Crosby had previously recorded this song with Paul Whiteman on 22nd December, 1928 (q.v.) (or may have done so as there is doubt about his participation).

(90) MY KINDA LOVE (Jo Trent; Louis Alter) Okeh W 401562-C
Dorsey Brothers Orchestra

Featuring trumpet in the introduction and sax solo in the first chorus, it is the final chorus, so excellently arranged by Glenn Miller, that takes the honours; attractive interplay between the reeds and brass in the first eight bars, Tommy's solo (tbn) and Jimmy's (clt) lead to the band playing out. An unexceptional song, the lyrics are poor material for Crosby and his

vocal does them more than justice.

Bing recorded the song again on 14th March, 1929 and on 24th April, 1954 for his "Musical Autobiography".

The song, copyrighted in 1929, achieved some popularity and was recorded by several artists including Ben Pollack and his Orchestra, Sarah Vaughan, Patti Page, Doris Day and Nat "King" Cole.

Show: "Americana" (2nd Edition) (1928)

28th Feb 1929(New York)

(91) MY ANGELINE (L Wolfe Gilbert; Mabel Wayne) Col W 147751
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

Four unissued takes had been recorded on 11th January and a similar fate awaited those recorded at this second attempt. Yet a third try was made on 7th March (q.v.).

(92) COQUETTE (Irving Berlin) Col W 148013-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

Returning to the Whiteman fold after his other recent recording activities, Crosby wastes no time and sings the first chorus after which it is entirely instrumental with the trumpet trio leading the final chorus. Bing doesn't sound completely at ease in a key perhaps pitched too high for him and finishes weakly on the last word, "sweetheart". This was the first arrangement by William Grant Still to be recorded by Whiteman. The pretty, feather-light waltz is as coquettish as its title, redolent with crinoline and old world charm.

Other than "Sunshine" (recorded with a vocal group on 13th February, 1928) this was the first of Irving Berlin's songs to be recorded by Bing Crosby and was written for Mary Pickford's "talkie" debut when every film had to have a theme song. Berlin had his first song published in 1907 and in the decades to follow wrote hundreds more despite the fact that he never could read music properly nor play the piano in any key other than F sharp major. In order to overcome this handicap he had a piano made with a lever beneath the keyboard which transposed his F sharp fingering to any other desired key. In 1913 when he appeared at the London Hippodrome, playing and singing his own songs, his piano came too.

Film: "Coquette"(Un Artists:1929)(Mary Pickford,Matt Moore)

7th Mar 1929(New York)

(93) MY ANGELINE (L Wolfe Gilbert; Mabel Wayne) Col W 147751-11
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

Two previous sessions, on 11th January and 28th February, having failed to produce an acceptable recording this third attempt was deemed successful at the overall eleventh take. It is reported that this old-fashioned, "quaint" waltz with its reference to Arcady, hardly what the musicians would have chosen to play, had them giggling hysterically, which possibly accounts for the number of takes. Arranged by Ferde Grofe, the trumpet section leads the first chorus after which Bing sings verse and chorus with a final chorus by the orchestra. Even without taking into account the ordinary tune and poor lyrics Bing's vocal is very good.

"Angeline" was pronounced to rhyme with "green" (although in one place the lyricist could do no better than "dream") in order, apparently, to avoid confusion with an earlier song of the same title that was written in 1895 by Victor Herbert.

14th Mar 1929(New York)

Accompanied by three of Whiteman's musicians (referred to as "Orchestral Accompaniment" in the Columbia file), Crosby sang two songs at this historically important session. It was the first occasion that recordings would appear under his name and he would be given "top billing".

(94) MY KINDA LOVE (Jo Trent; Louis Alter) Col W 148073-3
Matty Malneck (vla); Roy Bargy (pno);
Edward "Snoozer" Quinn (gtr)

Given excellent support by the accompanying trio, Bing sings a verse and two choruses. In an understandable effort to impress with his first "label" recording he carries rather to excess the dramatic rendering and a sudden change to a different, jazz style in the second chorus seems too abrupt; as the middle eight bars revert to the histrionic style and back again to rhythm for the last eight bars there is an uneveness about the performance. No doubt he was experimenting with his phrasing - it was unusual for its day and he even gets in his "b-b-boo" - but with no great success.

Although Bing said in his "Musical Autobiography" album when he again recorded the song on 24th April, 1954, that it was something he'd always liked the song was far from outstanding. He had recorded it only a few weeks previously with the Dorsey Brothers Orchestra (26th January, 1929) and the success of that recording no doubt influenced his choice.

(95) TILL WE MEET (Lou Davis; Ted Fio Rito) Col W 148074-3
Matty Malneck (vla); Roy Bargy (pno);
Edward "Snoozer" Quinn (gtr)

The second item of the session was no better chosen that the first. Again the trio gives Bing good backing in a similar arrangement. In the first half of the last chorus he uses tempo variation and improvises on the melody. In high register on the verse one wonders whether he is in the most suitable key but he settles more comfortably to the chorus. Singing the first chorus "straight" the pause for breath between "two" and "sweet lips" is unfortunate while the high note on which he ends the recording is dreadful. The song itself has little tune and lyrics that abound with cliches.

Some of the 78 rpm issues showed the title as "Till We Meet Again", an entirely different song written in 1918.

Not the happiest "label" debut, Crosby gained little advancement from the opportunity.

15th Mar 1929(New York)

(96) LOUISE (Leo Robin; Richard A Whiting) Col W 148086-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

After an introduction by the strings, which also carry the melody for most of the first chorus with clarinet leading in the bridge, a verse and Andy Secrest (cnt) lead to Bing's vocal. An orchestral chorus, mostly led by clarinet, and a repeat of the last sixteen bars end the recording. The vocal is of high quality and the singer gets as much out of the lyrics as could possibly be hoped for at the brisk tempo employed in the Roy Bargy arrangement.

Less than a month later, on 10th April, Crosby recorded the song again with the Rhythm Boys.

The song was tremendously popular and a huge success for Maurice Chevalier in his first American film, for which it was written. The film brought him international success and he was still singing the song thirty four years later in "A New Kind Of Love". In addition to several recordings

of the song by Chevalier it has been recorded by very many other artists and bands including Frank Trumbauer, Ben Pollack, Benny Goodman, Roy Fox and Dean Martin.

Film: "Innocents Of Paris" (Paramount:1929) (M Chevalier)
Film: "The Lost Weekend" (Paramount:1945) (Ray Milland, Jane Wyman)
Film: "The Stooge" (Paramount: 1951) (Dean Martin, Jerry Lewis)
Film: "A New Kind Of Love" (Paramount: 1963) (Paul Newman, Joanne Woodward, Maurice Chevalier)
Film: "Harry And Tonto" (20th C-Fox:1974) (Art Carney)

5th Apr 1929(New York)

(97) I'M IN SEVENTH HEAVEN (B G De Sylva-Lew Brown;Ray Henderson) Col W 148183-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Barris)

The group may have included a fourth voice, possibly Jack Fulton. An adequate arrangement by Bill Challis, but one that holds no surprises, has Beiderbecke (cnt) (returning from an absence enforced by illness) to solo the first half and final eight bars of the second chorus. After the harmonising group sing a chorus (Bing back to group work) the final orchestral chorus has a Bargy solo (pno) for the first half, strings leading the bridge and the ensemble playing out. The Bix solo is, for him, unexceptional but the vocal by the trio is well sung.

Written for the film, and recorded by Jolson, the song had no lasting quality.

Film: "Say It With Songs" (Warner Bros:1929) (Al Jolson, Davey Lee, Marion Nixon)

(98) LITTLE PAL (B G De Sylva-Lew Brown; Ray Henderson) Col W 148184
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

None of the four takes recorded at this session was issued but more takes were recorded on 25th April (q.v.).

10th April 1929(New York)

(99) SO THE BLUEBIRDS AND THE BLACKBIRDS GOT TOGETHER Col W 147888-6
Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys (Billy Moll; Harry Barris)

This song became a regular item of the Rhythm Boys repertoire and told of blackbirds bringing trouble, bluebirds bringing sunny weather and how their getting together brings life's mixed fortunes. Told with the trio's usual elan and boisterousness they scat and each have solo parts. Bing's slower tempo contribution contrasts neatly with the others' livelier offerings. With Barris at the piano and Bing on cymbals this is one of the last and one of the best of the trio's recordings. Previous takes, recorded on 25th January, had not been issued.

The song was the first that Crosby was seen singing on screen. The film was "King Of Jazz" and although he was heard on the soundtrack over the opening titles (singing his first ever film song, "Music Hath Charms") his initial appearance came later in the film when Paul Whiteman's Scrap Book is opened at the page "The Rhythm Boys" while they are heard singing a couple of lines of "Mississippi Mud". Their silhouettes are shown against a light background with Barris at a piano on the right, Rinker standing centre and Crosby in an easy chair at left. Barris says, "Hey, Bing, this isn't the type of number for this kind of a production." "What kind of a production is this?" asks Bing. "A super, super, special, special production," reply the others. "Well," says Bing, " I guess you're right. We should get out of the mud and reach for the higher and the finer things of life, the silver lining and the bluebird and life and love." "Ah," says Barris and begins his solo as Bing rises from his chair, switches on a standard lamp to reveal the trio. When they reach the end of the song the light fades and the three are left again in silhouette to conclude Bing Crosby's introduction to cinema-goers.

Film: "King Of Jazz" (Universal:1930) (Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra, Rhythm Boys)

(100) LOUISE (Leo Robin; Richard A Whiting) Col W 148428-2
Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys

This session was undoubtedly the Rhythm Boys' best and this recording is generally regarded as their highest achievement showing, in top form and with good material, how well they could perform. If Bing takes centre-stage his two colleagues also have very good parts and it amply demonstrates

all the different facets of their act - scat, comedy, dialogue, harmony and solo singing. Bing's name is mentioned when Barris answers the phone - "It's for you, Bing, a call from Louise." When his partners "get a bit frantic" he sings a dramatic, improvised solo to his girl friend. Finally they all sing, in turn, "There's nobody like Louise" with Barris gleefully adding, "I hope she buys this record." So she should for the boys have done her proud.

Bing had previously recorded the song on 15th March (q.v.).

25th April 1929(New York)

(101) LITTLE PAL (B G De Sylva - Lew Brown; Ray Henderson) Col W 148184-8
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

Four previous takes had been recorded on 5th April but not issued; another four were recorded at this session the last of which was issued. It is a somewhat run-of-the-mill performance in which Crosby's vocal, despite the bathos of the lyrics, is better than might be expected. Towards the end of the recording there is a change of mood and a brighter atmosphere introduced by the brass in the Ferde Grofe arrangement.

Featured on the screen and recorded by Al Jolson it was obviously intended by the composers as a follow up to their phenomenally successful "Sonny Boy" from Jolson's previous film, "The Singing Fool". A similar sort of "tear-jerker" and possibly more tuneful, if less dramatic, it met with nothing like the same response. Perhaps the customers had wept enough the first time. It was also recorded by Paul Robeson.

Film: "Say It With Songs" (Warner Bros:1929) (Al Jolson, Davey Lee, Marion Nixon)

3rd May 1929(New York)

(102) REACHING FOR SOMEONE (Edgar Leslie; Walter Donaldson) Col W 148408-4
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

In an excellent arrangement by Bill Challis the first chorus is highlighted by the strings soaring above the reeds and in the second, Trumbauer (sax) thoroughly enjoys himself with a splendid sixteen bars solo and another eight bars after the bridge. Beiderbecke (cnt) takes eight bars in the last chorus but says nothing new. Between the two Crosby, on his twenty-sixth birthday, is in good voice but ululating phrases added after some of the lines makes him sound anguished and spoils his effort.

The song was also recorded by orchestras led by George Olsen and Frank Trumbauer but achieved little success.

4th May 1929(New York)

(103) OH! MISS HANNAH (Thekla Hollingsworth; Jessie L Deppen) Col W 148421-4
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

A rather plodding performance of an arrangement by Bill Challis that includes sixteen bar solos by Bix (cnt), rather subdued, and Trumbauer. Bing sings a very good chorus with a timbre that is just right for a southern plantation song; we know it's that with lines like "mocking birds am singing", "the moon am shining bright" and "the roses am a-nodding".

Copyrighted in 1924 the song had a measure of popularity. Among its early recordings were those of The Revelers (1925) and Jack Hylton (1926).

(104) YOUR MOTHER AND MINE (Joe Goodwin; Gus Edwards) Col W 148422
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (probably Crosby, Rinker, Fulton, Cullen)

None of the four takes was issued but it was recorded again on 16th May (q.v.).

(105) ORANGE BLOSSOM TIME (Joe Goodwin; Gus Edwards) Col W 148423-4
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

A good, all round bright performance with Bing contributing his share with fine tone and authority in a Grofe arrangement.

This was the first issued recording by Crosby of a song by Gus Edwards upon whose life the film "The Star Maker" (1939) was somewhat loosely based and in which Bing was to play the leading role. This Gus Edwards song was written as a big feature number for the 1929 "Revue" film. It was oranges, oranges all the way: in the first prints of the film the production number was tinted orange colour and some large cinemas in the US added orange blossom perfume. Some audiences, it was reported, added to the fun by throwing rotten oranges at the screen. Perhaps the song never had a chance but it was overshadowed by the film's big hit, "Singin' In The Rain".

Film: "Hollywood Revue Of 1929" (MGM:1929) (Cliff "Ukulele Ike" Edwards, Jack Benny, Buster Keaton)

16th May 1929(New York)

(106) YOUR MOTHER AND MINE (Joe Goodwin; Gus Edwards) Col W 148422-8
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (probably Crosby, Rinker, Fulton, Cullen)

Four unissued takes had been recorded on 4th May. Not the best of Gus Edwards' songs there is nothing outstanding about this recording but it is a workmanlike effort of a Roy Bargy arrangement. Crosby sings with the group and has solo lines; clarinet is well featured and the last chorus is enlivened for a few bars when the orchestra seems to lose patience with the dullness. The group singers have been variously assigned. There is no doubt about Crosby's presence and the probable line up of the others is shown; Fulton can be heard but Barris, sometimes credited, is not aurally present.

Other recordings of the song were made by Dorsey Brothers, Nick Lucas and Lawrence Welk but made no impact.

Film: "Hollywood Revue Of 1929" (MGM:1929) (Cliff "Ukulele Ike" Edwards, Jack Benny, Buster Keaton)
Film: "Show Of Shows" (Warner Bros:1929) (Frank Fay, Ted Lewis and his Orchestra, Nick Lucas, Beatrice Lillie, Winnie Lightner, Alice White)

(107) S'POSIN' (Andy Razaf; Paul Denniker) Col W 148544-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

Recorded at a sprightly tempo, unvarying throughout, this is a very musicianly and professional version in an arrangement by Roy Bargy. Crosby, in a comfortable key, with a song that was written within a short range of the scale and having few "highs" to encounter, sounds very confident.

Bing recorded this song again, ten years after it was written, on 3rd April, 1939. Fats Waller, Andy Kirk and Perry Como were among others making successful recordings.

24th May 1929(New York)

This was the second session where Bing had the label credit and he was again accompanied by a trio of Whiteman musicians (referred to as "Orchestral Accompaniment" in the Columbia file).

Col W 148619-2-3
(108) I KISS YOUR HAND, MADAME(Sam Lewis-Joe Young;Ralph Erwin)
Matty Malneck (vla); Roy Bargy (pno); Eddie Lang (gtr)

After a short introduction by the trio Crosby takes a verse and three choruses in the first of which Lang's guitar is prominent in support with charming chord structure. Bing hums and whistles an improvised way through the second and sings the third with Malneck leading the backing. Ben Selvin, then recording manager at Columbia, is reported to have said that Bing added the humming and whistling because he felt the lack of a full orchestra but it is more likely, as Bing was always at ease with small groups, that it was included for variation.

Take 3 is a dubbing of take 2.

Originally a 1928 German song ("Ich Kusse Ihr Hand, Madame") by Erwin with lyrics by Fritz Rotter it was introduced into the USA by Rudy Vallee and the lovely melody has remained a favourite. It was sung by Crosby in the film he made in 1946 when, in a Tyrolean Inn setting, he provides the atmosphere required to cure a fear complex developed by a thoroughbred poodle. He also recorded the song again on 17th January, 1947. It has been given varied recorded arrangements among the early ones being those by "Whispering" Jack Smith, Leo Reisman and his Orchestra, Jack Hylton and his Orchestra (with vocal by Sam Browne), Donald Novis and, the most bizarre, Spike Jones and his City Slickers.

Film: "The Emperor Waltz" (Paramount:1946) (Bing Crosby, Joan Fontaine)
Film: "So This Is Love" (Warner Bros:1953)(Kathryn Grayson) (UK title: "The Grace Moore Story")

(109) BABY, OH WHERE CAN YOU BE? (Ted Koehler; Frank Magine) Col W 148620-1
Matty Malneck (vla); Roy Bargy (pno); Eddie Lang (gtr)

There could hardly be a greater contrast than between the two songs recorded at this session. Bing tries to infuse some interest into this tedious composition by first singing a chorus and verse "straight" and then treating the last chorus rhythmically ("b-b-boo" again) but strangely reverting to "straight" for the middle eight bars; he doesn't succeed. As this was his second chance to make ground as a solo artist the choice of material is difficult to understand. Perhaps he was trying to be "different".

The song was also recorded by "Fats" Waller but it never achieved any worthwhile popularity.

6th Sep 1929(New York)

(110) AT TWILIGHT (William G Tracy; Maceo Pinkard) Col W 148985-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Fulton)

This was the orchestra's first recording since its abortive trip to the West Coast. A tuneful, Grofe arranged, pastoral taken *allegretto* leaves little time to admire the countryside. The brass section leads most of the first chorus and strings lead a verse before the vocalists take a chorus. The final lively chorus features an Izzy Freidman (sax) solo in the middle eight bars. The trio harmonise well as they tell of the birds and the flowers, Crosby is heard on one solo phrase and there is neat phrasing at the end of the bridge with an effective pause between "calm" and "in the evening".

The song met with reasonable success and was also recorded by Ruth Etting but it didn't last.

(111) WAITING AT THE END OF THE ROAD (Irving Berlin) Col W 148986
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

The four takes recorded at this session were all rejected. Bix Beiderbecke was unwell and three of the takes were spoilt by faulty entries to his eight bars solo. Further takes were recorded on 13th September (q.v.).

13th Sep 1929(New York)

(112) WAITING AT THE END OF THE ROAD (Irving Berlin) Col W 148986-8
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

Unnisued takes of the recording had been made a week earlier. The introduction contains phrases from Dvorak's "New World" Symphony, upon which the spiritual "Goin' Home" was based, and we are at once in quasi-folksong territory. Mike Pingitore (bjo) also gives a folksy touch behind Bing's well taken vocal. In the last chorus Beiderbecke (cnt) has an eight bar solo in the bridge. Immediately preceding this solo the symphonic phrases are repeated being cleverly interpolated into the melody by Ferde Grofe's arrangement. Sadly, this was to be Bix's last issued recording for Paul Whiteman.

The song was written by Berlin for King Vidor's "Hallelujah", the first all-negro "talkie".

Film: "Hallelujah" (MGM:1929) (Daniel Haynes, Nina Mae McKinney)

Col W 149005-3
(113) WHEN YOU'RE COUNTING THE STARS ALONE (Benee Russell - Jack Murray; Vincent Rose)
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Fulton)

After the first take of this recording Bix Beiderbecke was too ill to continue and his place was taken by Andy Secrest. Proceeding at a lively pace the first chorus is well pronounced while the second features the saxophone in all but the middle eight bars. After a verse by the orchestra the trio sings a chorus and in the final chorus Secrest (cnt) takes a solo in the bridge. Although Bing has only a couple of solo lines his voice leads throughout the vocal. The arrangement was by Bill Challis.

27th Sep 1929(New York)

This session, held in Union Square studio, was supervised by Ben Selvin, recording manager at Columbia. Crosby was the featured soloist with label credit, the Columbia file showing "with Orchestra". Although the identity of the musicians is generally considered to be as shown below, many years later Selvin thought that they were Bob Effros (tpt), Rube Bloom (pno) and Joe Venuti (vln), a recollection shared by Effros.

(114) CAN'T WE BE FRIENDS? (Paul James; Kay Swift) Col W 149066-3
Charles Margulis (tpt), Chester Hazlett (clt), Matty Malneck (vln), Roy Bargy (pno) and strings

After a short introduction by Malneck (vln) and Bargy (pno) Crosby sings the verse accompanied by Bargy and then a chorus backed by the small orchestra. The violin takes the melody line for the first half of the final chorus before Bing returns to finish the mournful ballad. Having been deceived he sings with feeling, and some vocal mannerisms, that "it's too late" and that "she gave me the air". Although the material was not of the highest quality the vocal is well taken and "Variety" magazine commented, "Crosby has a peach tenor that may go baritone with age. Looks like a possible favourite, properly piloted."

The song was written in 1929 by a New York banker, James Warburg (Paul James was a pseudonym) and his wife. It became popular, perhaps beyond its true worth, and was recorded by many artists including Benny Carter, Bob Crosby and the Bobcats, Muggsy Spanier, Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald (who recorded it again with Louis Armstrong and the Oscar Peterson Trio).

Show: "The Little Show" (1929) (Clifton Webb, Libby Holman, Fred Allen)
Film: "The Man I Love" (Warner Bros:1946) (Ida Lupino, Robert Alda)

(115) GAY LOVE (Sidney Clare; Oscar Levant) Col W 149067-3
Charles Margulis (tpt), Chester Hazlett (clt), Matty Malneck (vln), Roy Bargy (pno) and strings

This ballad, in tango rhythm, has Bing singing a verse and chorus, whistling a half chorus, with Malneck (vln) and Bargy (pno) supporting, and singing the last sixteen bars. His musical whistling trills nicely complement the singing that had some mannerisms that came, perhaps, from listening to Austin "Skin" Young and were to become an important part as the "sob" element in a developing style. Crosby sings well but, again, the choice of material leaves something to be desired; one can suppose that this was chosen only because it came from a currently successful film. Clare could hardly have been expected to foresee its retrospectively unfortunate title with its revised connotation; Levant, classical pianist, actor and wit, might have been suspected of clairvoyance but he didn't write the lyrics. He appeared, years later, with Crosby on radio and in the film "Rhythm On The River" and appeared regularly on Al Jolson's Kraft Music Hall radio shows.

Film: "The Delightful Rogue" (1929) (Rod La Rocque)

9th Oct 1929(New York)

(116) GREAT DAY (William Rose - Edward Eliscu; Vincent Youmans) Col W 149124-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Fulton, Cullen)

Without introduction Bing sings the verse and then joins the group to sing the chorus; the reeds section leads the next chorus with the strings taking the bridge; Andy Secrest (cnt) has a solo in the third chorus. With this better material the singers and musicians sound in excellent form. Bing's verse is very good indeed and his voice is prominent in the group. Secrest's solo is not outstanding but with a pulsating rhythm from the start the pointed arrangement by Challis offers every promise of a great day.

Crosby recorded the song again on 24th February, 1975. The song was written in 1929 and for weeks Challis sought the composer's permission

for Paul Whiteman to record it together with "Without A Song". Youmans, however, was reluctant as he disliked jazz and popular bands but finally agreed when Challis promised that the only improvised solo would be played by Beiderbecke. By the time the recording session had been arranged, however, Bix had been taken ill. Challis urged postponement but Whiteman refused and the solo was played by Andy Secrest. Youmans was angered and attempted, but failed, to prevent the record being released.

"Great Day" was written for the Broadway show and became a standard. The show ran for only 36 performances and failed because the Wall Street financial crash of 24th October, 1929 helped empty the theatres. Disaster also struck the projected film "Great Day" which MGM started shooting in 1930 and intended as a starring vehicle for Joan Crawford: it was abandoned after only ten days work. The show, despite its failure, had three first class songs ("Great Day", "Without A Song" and "More Than you Know") all of which survived.

The song has been recorded by many artists including Dick Haymes and the Andrews Sisters, Nelson Eddy, Allan Jones and Lena Horne.

Show: "Great Day" (1929) (Mayo Methot, Allan Prior)
Film: "Funny Lady" (Columbia:1975) (Barbra Streisand, James Caan) (A sequel to "Funny Girl" and also based on the life of Fanny Brice)

(117) WITHOUT A SONG (William Rose - Edward Eliscu; Vincent Youmans) Col W 149125-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

A trumpet introduces two choruses by the orchestra, a vocal chorus by Crosby and a final half chorus by the orchestra. There are no instrumental solos but Bing sings a fittingly sturdy refrain of a robust song that, like its stable companion "Great Day" (q.v.), became a standard. The tempo is too fast for a singer to give full expression to the lyrics in a pretty and well-varied arrangement by Bill Challis. It is, however, an excellent dance-band vocal and though Bing sounds a little unsteady as he attacks the high note at the close of the bridge on "soul" he most effectively continues the next line, "I'll never know .. " without having to pause for breath. Eddie Lang (gtr) is heard faintly in support.

The song, written in the style of a negro spiritual, was intended to have a verse but Youmans hadn't written one when the show "Great Day" opened and the long, 64 bars chorus remained forever without one. It became a very popular item for tenors and baritones and recordings were made by Lawrence Tibbett, Nelson Eddy, Jan Peerce, Richard Tauber, Mario Lanza (all operatic singers), Tommy Dorsey and his Orchestra

(with vocal by Frank Sinatra) and Perry Como. A comedian said that he would "do the impossible and sing without a song".

Show: "Great Day" (1929) (Mayo Methot, Allan Prior)
Film: "Funny Lady" (Columbia:1975) (Barbra Sreisand)

16th Oct 1929(New York)

(118) I'M A DREAMER, AREN'T WE ALL? (B G De Sylva - Lew Brown; Ray Henderson) Col W 149149-4
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Vcl grp (Crosby, Rinker, Fulton, Cullen)

An unusual, crescendo introduction and two orchestral choruses and a verse precede the vocal in which Bing has solo lines interspersed with those sung by the quartet all well supported by Eddie Lang (gtr). The arrangement, by Grofe, if not quite as soporific as the title might suggest is by no means stimulating and there is little to commend the performance other than for the singing despite the somewhat odd mix of solo and group lines.

Written in 1929 for the film it was part of a highly profitable score by a very successful team.

Film: "Sunny Side Up" (Fox: 1929) (Janet Gaynor, Charles Farrell, El Brendel)
Film: "Holy Terror" (Fox: 1931)
Film: "The Best Things In Life Are Free" (20th C-Fox: 1956) (Gordon Macrae, Ernest Borgnine, Dan Dailey) (A highly fictionalised story of De Sylva, Brown and Henderson)

(119) IF I HAD A TALKING PICTURE OF YOU (B G De Sylva - Lew Brown; Ray Henderson) Col W 149150-4
Paul Whiteman & his Orcestra

From the introduction, when a sustained clarinet note plays over the orchestra, until the final chorus with its short trumpet solo, the arrangement by Lennie Hayton is always interesting. After an orchestral chorus and a verse in which the clarinet is featured, Bing takes a chorus supported by Lang (gtr); Lang and Joe Venuti (vln) then demonstrate how to swing a chorus and the orchestra plays out. Bing's vocal of this lively number is virile and his improvisation on the last line is a joy. His finish on a high note, not something he did particularly well during his Whiteman days, is on this occasion clear and confident.

Another song from the excellent film score it was, obviously, inspired by the inception of sound movies and became very popular. The title of the bright, if perhaps a little overrated, tune was no handicap when "talking pictures" had become the leading entertainment medium of the day. The song had a tremendous vogue and was prolifically recorded by just about everybody from "banjo king" Eddie Peabody to bands and singers of all kinds.

Film: "Sunny Side Up" (Fox:1929) (Janet Gaynor, Charles Farrell, El Brendel)
Film: "The Best Things In Life Are Free" (20th C-Fox:1956) (Ernest Borgnine, Gordon Macrae, Dan Dailey) (This film was a highly fictionalised story of De Sylva, Brown and Henderson)

(120) MOONLIGHT AND ROSES (Ben Black; Neil Moret) Col W 91790-1
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp

The identity of the vocalists, other than lead singer Jack Fulton, has never been determined and it is extremely doubtful whether Crosby was among them as his voice cannot be recognised. Events relating to the discovery of this recording are referred to under "Southern Medley" (below) and when the author sent a taping of it to Bing in 1962, Bing told him that he couldn't recall whether he was in the group.

After a chorus (in which a trombone is featured) and a verse the group sings a chorus accompanied by Lang (gtr); a chorus of "Moonlight Bay" is then interpolated by the orchestra which then reverts to the original tune for another verse and chorus. The flowing melody line is not enhanced by an unfeeling and mechanical rendition and the inclusion of "Moonlight Bay" seems an unnecessary intrusion evoking a jauntier atmosphere than that of the tranquil main melody (although the original Whiteman score showed "Moonlight And Roses Medley"). The arrangement, written by William Grant Still on 23rd August, 1929, was for a special private recording for Paul Whiteman that was unissued although two takes were recorded. It was pressed on a 12" 78 rpm record together with "Southern Melodies" (q.v.).

The song was written in 1925, the lovely tune being adapted by Neil Moret (a pseudonym used by Charles E Daniels) from Edwin H Lemare's "Andantino" for organ. It has never been out of favour and has had very many recordings including those by John McCormack, Mills Brothers, Lanny Ross, Dorothy Squires and Victor Young and his Orchestra.

Film: "Tin Pan Alley" (20th C-Fox:1940) (Alice Faye, Betty Grable, John Payne, Jack Oakie)

18th Oct 1929(New York)

(121) SOUTHERN MEDLEY — Col W 91791-1

(a) Old Black Joe (Stephen Collins Foster)
(b) My Old Kentucky Home (Stephen Collins Foster)
(c) Carry Me Back To Old Virginny (James A Bland)
(d) Old Folks At Home (Stephen Collins Foster)
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

Sombre chords introduce the medley before Bing sings "Old Black Joe"; the orchestra, featuring a trombone solo, plays the next tune, Bing returns for "Carry Me Back To Old Virginny" and the orchestra, with a solo by Mike Pingitore (bjo) providing the right atmosphere, concludes with "Old Folks At Home". The superior, stirring vocals are sung with verve, authority and great feeling and on the second Crosby is well supported by his favourite accompanist, Eddie Lang (gtr).

The recording was not issued until 1973 and the story of its discovery is intriguing. In August, 1960 an English visitor to the Whiteman Collection at Williamstown, Massachusetts found lying on a dusty shelf a 12" 78 rpm disc test pressing with a plain white label on either side. Although no titles or credits were shown, curiosity was roused and the curator agreed to play the record: on one side the Whiteman orchestra was heard playing "Moonlight And Roses" (q.v.) and on the other side Crosby's voice was unmistakeable. The master numbers were in a series reserved for private recordings and the matrix card bore the notation "Special private recording for Paul Whiteman". It also informed that two takes had been made, the arrangement for the four songs medley having been written by Roy Bargy on 5th September, 1929. The card showed "Southern Melodies" but the written score was endorsed "Southern Medley." It later transpired that originally only ten copies of these private recordings were pressed. In 1962 tapings of the two recordings were presented, on a restricted basis, to their discoverer but the author was later permitted to send copies to Bing who could not, however, recall their having been made. At this time there were only a very few taped copies in existence as their had been no official authorisation for their general release but in 1973 a US record producer issued an LP that included "Southern Medley".

"Old Black Joe" was published in 1860 and this recording was discovered exactly a century after the first appearance of the song. It is one of the half dozen or so on which Foster's highest reputation rests. The character of the aged negro had been suggested to the composer some years earlier by a servant in the household of his fiancee, Jane McDowell. The original "Joe" was told that he would someday appear in a song but he died before it was written. Bing Crosby recorded the song again on 16th June, 1944.

Film: "King Of Jazz" (Universal:1930) (Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra, Rhythm Boys)
Film: "Hollywood Hotel" (Warner Bros: 1937) (Dick Powell, Rosemary Lane, Lola Lane)
Film: "Swanee River" (20th C-Fox:1939) (Don Ameche, Al Jolson, Andrea Leeds) (This was based loosely upon the life of Stephen Collins Foster, played by Don Ameche)

"Carry Me Back To Old Virginny" was first published in 1878 and is often thought to be the work of Stephen Foster. It is certainly up to his high standard but was, in fact, by the negro composer James A Bland. The song was later officially adopted by the State of Virginia. Bing recorded the song again in December, 1960.

Film: "Maytime" (MGM:1937)(Jeanette MacDonald, Nelson Eddy)
Film: "Road To Singapore" (Paramount:1940) (Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, Dorothy Lamour)
Film: "Road To Rio" (Paramount:1948)(Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, Dorothy Lamour)
Film: "With A Song In My Heart" (20th C-Fox:1952) (Susan Hayward) (This was the story of Jane Froman whose singing voice was dubbed on the soundtrack for Susan Hayward)

Col W 194379-3

(122) A BUNDLE OF OLD LOVE LETTERS (Arthur Freed; Nacio Herb Brown)
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

Three takes were recorded and given the master number W149158. For reasons unknown the recordings were re-mastered on 31st October and take 3 was issued as W 194379-3.

The first orchestral chorus has the reeds section to the fore with a trombone lead for the middle eight bars. Bing then takes his chorus with Lang (gtr) accompaniment. It is a pleasing waltz tune played *legato* but the Grofe arrangement is quite ordinary and there is litle to enthuse over other than Crosby's emotive vocal. A snatch of breath between "old" and "love letters" in the last line is distracting but his phrasing of "it's a beautiful play with an unhappy ending" is an indication of how he manages to make the utmost out of the material.

Arthur Freed, the lyricist, later to become a producer and executive with MGM, had previously been managing director of the Orange Grove Theatre in Hollywood where one of his presentations was an obscure show called "the Picklings" for which he hired two new and unknown arrivals, Al Rinker and Bing Crosby.

Film: "Lord Byron Of Broadway" (MGM:1930) (UK title: "What Price Melody")

(123) AFTER YOU'VE GONE (Henry Creamer; Turner Layton) Col W 149159-3
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

The orchestra plays a verse and chorus before Crosby, with his now usual accompanist Eddie Lang (gtr), takes a chorus; the next features solos by trumpet and trombone followed by a Venuti (vln) and Lang (gtr) chorus and another by the band. The arrangement, by William Grant Still, is played straight until Bing enters and "there's no denying" that with Lang's excellent support he sets a lively mood that is continued to the end. The Venuti-Lang chorus is a fine example of their work and includes a dazzling short cadenza by Venuti; after the final chorus by the orchestra, the saxophone coda is well conceived.

Crosby recorded the song again on 16th January, 1946 and 26th June, 1953.

Turner Layton wrote many fine songs and was also an entertainer in US vaudeville. In 1924 he and his partner, Clarence Johnstone, came to England and they achieved an enormous success on the variety stage and in the recording studios. When, in 1935, Johnstone returned to America and the partnership was dissolved Layton continued as a solo entertainer for another fifteen years.

Written in 1918, "After You've Gone" suggests the earlier tune "Peg O' My Heart" that was copyrighted in 1912. A catalogue could be compiled of the people who have recorded this tremendously popular standard. Notable entries would be Al Jolson, Sophie Tucker, Fats Waller, Benny Goodman, Ruth Etting, Jack Teagarden, Quintet of the Hot Club of France, Bessie Smith, Marion Harris, Judy Garland, Spike Hughes and the Venuti-Lang Orchestra.

Film: "Unholy Partners" (MGM: 1941) (Edward G Robinson, Edward Arnold, Laraine Day)
Film: "For Me And My Gal" (MGM:1942) (Judy Garland, George Murphy, Gene Kelly)
Film: "Jolson Sings Again" (Columbia:1949) (Larry Parks, Al Jolson (soundtrack voice)) (This film, a sequel to "The Jolson Story"(1946), continued a story based on the life of Al Jolson)
Film: "The Five Pennies" (Paramount:1959) (Danny Kaye, Louis Armstrong) (The film was based upon the life of Red Nichols)
Film: "Some Came Running" (MGM: 1959) (Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Shirley Maclaine)

1930

Following his abortive trip to Hollywood Whiteman and Universal resolved their differences and once again the entire Whiteman entourage travelled west and production began on the film "King Of Jazz". Actual shooting commenced on 15th February and Paul promised Bing a featured solo in the "Song Of The Dawn" sequence. Crosby, however, became involved in a car accident and was gaoled for 30 days on a drunk-driving charge thereby losing the opportunity that Whiteman had offered. Nevertheless leniency showed by the Court enabled him to make some short appearances in the film. During February and March he recorded, with the orchestra, some of the songs from the film. In April, when his work on the film was finished, Paul took the band on a tour of theatres in Los Angeles, San Diego, Portland and Seattle. In Portland a bootlegger alleged that Crosby owed him money and, although this was denied, Whiteman settled and deducted the amount from Bing's salary. When Whiteman returned to New York, Crosby, Rinker and Barris, aggrieved about the bootlegger incident and preferring the West Coast, parted from him at Seattle in April and returned to Los Angeles where they appeared, very successfully, at Eddie Brandstatter's Montmartre Cafe. They also made brief appearances in films and in September commenced work at the Cocoanut Grove of the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles with Gus Arnheim and his Orchestra. Through Arnheim's regular broadcasts they became popular all over California. September was a busy month for Crosby: he signed a contract with Mack Sennett to appear in a series of two reel films and on the 29th married Wilma Winifred Wyatt, a promising young starlet from the William Fox Studios, known professionally as Dixie Lee. Bing made his first recordings with Gus Arnheim in October.

10th Feb 1930(Los Angeles)

(124) HAPPY FEET (Jack Yellen; Milton Ager) Col W 149810-1
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Barris)

Without any introduction the orchestra plays a verse, chorus and verse before the vocal chorus by the trio and then returns for two more choruses. Although no more than a fetching little tune Hayton's lively arrangement is performed with a humour that befits the title of the song. The vocal is well harmonised and well backed by Lang (gtr) and Hayton (celeste). The penultimate chorus is exhilarating with solos by Trumbauer (sax), Secrest (cnt) and Venuti (vln). It is no surprise that Crosby and his colleagues tell us that they "keep cheerful on an earful of music sweet".

This was the first of six recordings by Whiteman of songs from his film and the first of the four that included Crosby. The film score written by Yellen and Ager, a highly successful team, became very popular and the songs were recorded by practically every dance band in existence although "Happy Feet", if well remembered as typical of its time, didn't last in any repertoire. In the film it was a production number featuring Sisters G and the Rhythm Boys.

Film: "King Of Jazz" (Universal:1930) (Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra, Rhythm Boys)

21st Mar 1930(Los Angeles)

(125) SONG OF THE DAWN (Jack Yellen; Milton Ager) Col W 149822-2
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby and male chorus)

After the first orchestral chorus Bing sings a verse, accompanied by Lang (gtr); the vocal group takes over for the chorus that follows, with Bing singing the middle eight bars. The orchestra re-enters with the reeds section led by Trumbauer, and a chorus briefly features Venuti (vln) before the group returns to sing a repeat of the last stanza. This song, from the "rousing chorus" genre, might have come straight from the operetta pen of Romberg or Friml. However, in the film for which it was written, instead of Riffs, Mounties or Musketeers a production number had a ranch-house full of cowboys to greet the dawn. In this recording the "cowboy"

chorus is vigorous if not always in unison and the forced high "gone" (sung to rhyme with "dawn") in the final stanza could mean that it was the last dawn for somebody. The group members are unidentified and perhaps they preferred to remain anonymous. Crosby's solo verse and chorus bridge are well sung with the energy the song demands but it is not ideal material for his talent. His emphasis of the first word of the line "Look, this morning they're blue" is a brave attempt to dramatise the daybreak. The arrangement was by Ferde Grofe.

This is the song that Bing should have sung in the film but instead found himself in gaol on a drunk-driving charge after a car accident. The missed opportunity, however, gave a chance to John Boles who made the most of it. Bing later commented that he thought Boles had a voice better suited than his to this type of song.

Film: "King Of Jazz" (Universal:1930)(Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra, Rhythm Boys)

22nd Mar 1930(Los Angeles)

(126) LIVIN' IN THE SUNLIGHT, LOVIN' IN THE MOONLIGHT (Al Lewis, Al Sherman)
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra Col W 149824-4

There could hardly be two singers with styles so far apart as Maurice Chevalier, for whom this song was written, and Bing Crosby. The former, a personality entertainer, had a huge success with the song and yet Crosby, within the strict confines of a dance orchestra, makes an excellent job of it. A most agreeable arrangement by Ferde Grofe has the reeds section leading for much of the first chorus with the strings playing obbligato and the brass taking over for the bridge; Trumbauer (sax) is heard briefly in the verse before Bing's assured vocal. The final chorus includes short interludes by Bill Rank (tbn) and Secrest (tpt).

Film: "The Big Pond" (Paramount:1930) (Maurice Chevalier, Claudette Colbert)

23rd Mar 1930(Los Angeles)

(127) A BENCH IN THE PARK (Jack Yellen; Milton Ager) Col W 149825-2
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Brox Sisters
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Barris)

A mellow orchestral chorus led by the strings and saxes is followed by a contrasting staccato verse. The Brox Sisters, with splendid accompaniment by Eddie Lang (gtr), then sing their chorus attractively during the second half of which they are supported by the male trio with Bing singing a few scat notes. The verse that follows features Andy Secrest (cnt) and in the final chorus Bill Rank (tbn) is heard briefly. It is a good arrangement by Ferde Grofe of a tune that has its fair share of repeated melodic phrases.

As in the film for which the song was written, Crosby, Rinker and Barris are in a role subordinate to the Brox Sisters. The song is also featured in the film by Stanley Smith and Jeanette Loff.

A plethora of contemporary band recordings indicated the popularity of the song.

Film: "King Of Jazz" (Universal: 1930)(Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra, Brox Sisters, Rhythm Boys)

(128) I LIKE TO DO THINGS FOR YOU (Jack Yellen; Milton Ager) Col W 149826-2
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra
Voc grp (Crosby, Rinker, Barris)

The opening orchestral chorus includes a routine sax solo and after a verse the vocal is performed competently, if without distinction, with the enduring quality of Lang's accompaniment (gtr). In the verse and chorus that follow there are well played solos by Secrest (cnt), piano, and Trumbauer (cmel). The arrangement was by Lennie Hayton.

Although sung by a male group this is another song with feminine lyrics; written as a novelty number for the film (in which it was sung by Jeanie Lang to Paul Whiteman) it is ordinary and unsuccessful out of its original context. This was the last of the Whiteman recordings of songs from the film score, songs highly popular in their day but now almost forgotten.

Film: "King Of Jazz" (Universal: 1930)(Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra, Rhythm Boys, Jeanie Lang)

Col W 149827-4

(129) YOU BROUGHT A NEW KIND OF LOVE TO ME (Irving Kahal; Sammy Fain - Pierre Norman)
Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra

In a good arrangement by Ferde Grofe there are plenty of instrumental solos. The first and last eight bars of the initial chorus has the appealing sound of sax supported by the brass section and the verse that follows is trumpet-led throughout. Bing's well delivered vocal is full of confidence and ably supported by Lang (gtr) and Hayton (celeste). The last chorus has a trombone solo for the bridge and the coda is a trumpet flourish.

After almost three and a half years this was Bing's final recording with the Whiteman orchestra. Not the greatest of songs - it was the Chevalier style and personality that made it popular - but the band gives an excellent performance and Crosby showed how he had vocally matured during his formative years.

Film: "The Big Pond" (Paramount: 1930) (Maurice Chevalier, Claudette Colbert)
Film: "Monkey Business" (Paramount: 1931) (Marx Brothers)
Film: "A New Kind Of Love" (Paramount: 1963) (Paul Newman, Joanne Woodward, Maurice Chevalier)

23rd May 1930(Los Angeles)

(130) A BENCH IN THE PARK (Jack Yellen; Milton Ager) Col W 149840-4
Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys

The boys introduce this with, appropriately, a few lines from "I Was Walking In The Park One Day" which leads to Bing, accompanied by Harry Barris (pno), singing an excellent solo verse while his two partners hum in the background. A chorus taken slowly by the trio, including solo lines by Crosby, is followed by a scat sequence in which Barris is well to the fore both vocally and on piano. In a comedy finish Bing sings a couple of lines before interruption by a whistle and the arrival of a cop ("opkay") to evict the courting couple from the park. An overall satisfactory performance, with Barris making a worthy contribution, it is an entirely different approach from the previous recording of the song on 23rd March.

(131) EVERYTHING'S AGREED UPON (Bing Crosby & Harry Barris) Col W 149841
Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys

This, the last of the recordings by the Rhythm Boys under the auspices

of Paul Whiteman, was, alas, never issued and remains untraced.

26th Aug 1930(Los Angeles)

(132) THREE LITTLE WORDS (Bert Kalmar; Harry Ruby) Vic PBVE 61013-5
Duke Ellington & his Orchestra
Rhythm Boys

Orchestra personnel Arthur Whetsel, Freddy Jenkins, Cootie Williams (tpts); Joe Nanton, Juan Tizol (tbns); Johnny Hodges, Harry Carney, Barney Bigard (reeds); Duke Ellington (pno); Fred Guy (bjo); Wellman Braud (sbs); Sonny Greer (dms)

Duke Ellington (pno) introduces two impeccably played gently swinging choruses, both full of rich and varied sounds before the trio sings a well harmonised chorus. More piano chords bring a final chorus of interplay between the brass section and reeds. A string bass, "slapped" by Wellman Braud, and a firm rhythm section give solid foundation throughout a fine combination of good jazz and dance music. Now, with his two partners, having parted from Whiteman, this was Crosby's first recording with Ellington and he must have found the music, so different from that to which he had been accustomed, a most exhilarating experience.

Ellington had a recollection many years later that the recording had been made at RKO Studios, Hollywood but whatever the venue it has an unusual history. The first three takes, none of which was issued, were recorded on 20th August, and each had different vocalists: the first was by Cootie Williams, the second by Jimmy Miller and the third by Emmanual Hall's Quintet. Three other takes were recorded on 26th August: rejected take 4 included a Crosby solo vocal and the other two takes had vocals by the Rhythm Boys but only take 5 was issued.

The song, written for the 1930 film (for which Ellington and the Rhythm Boys provided a soundtrack recording), was the composers' biggest success. Simple lyrics to a simple tune gave simple pleasure and interest in the song was revived by the 1950 film of the same title. It has been recorded by many artists including Fred Astaire, Nat "King" Cole, Quintet of the Hot Club of France, Patti Page and innumerable bands.

Show: "Folly To Be Wise" (London: 1931)
Film: "Check And Double Check" (RKO: 1930) (Amos 'n' Andy, Duke Ellington & his Orchestra)
Film: "Journey Into Fear" (RKO: 1942) (Orson Welles, Joseph Cotten)
Film: "Three Little Words" (MGM: 1950) (Fred Astaire, Red Skelton) (The film was based upon the lives of Bert Kalmar

(Astaire) and Harry Ruby (Skelton))
Film: "Stardust Memories" (United Artists: 1980) (Woody Allen)

29th Oct 1930(Hollywood)

This was the first of several sessions when Bing Crosby recorded with Gus Arnheim's Orchestra. Through agent Leonard Goldstein, Crosby, Rinker and Barris were signed by Arnheim, whose orchestra was resident at the prestigious Cocoanut Grove of the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, and first appeared there in September. Although Arnheim could never command the services of the highest talented musicians in the Whiteman tradition his band was a very popular attraction. He was the composer of several popular songs one of which, "Sweet And Lovely", became his signature tune. The Arnheim-Crosby sessions produced eleven recordings and all but one featured solo vocal refrains, the other being the last made by the Rhythm Boys. The orchestrations used by Arnheim were less complex than Whiteman's and gave freer rein to Crosby's talents; with less restriction his potential came closer to full realisation.

The exact personnel of the orchestra for each recording is unknown, varying with session and title, but the following musicians were with Arnheim at about this time, some departing and some arriving:
Walter Holzhaus, Stanley Green (tpts); Marlo Imes, Billy White, Norman Taylor (tbns); Ted Krise, Tom Sandvall, Bobby Burns, Fred MacMurray, Joe Krechter, Jimmy Grier, George Moore (reeds) Henry Haworski, Lou Shurtliff, Sterling Young, Russ Columbo, Carlos Molina (vlns); Gus Arnheim, Bill Ellfeldt, Harry Barris (pno); Ward Lay, Nelson Hall, Eddie Bush (gtr/bjo); P G Smearer Ed Landry (bs); Bob Perry, Art Fleming, Dillon Ober (dms) Among the vocalists were Russ Columbo and Donald Novis. Fred MacMurray (clt/ten) left the orchestra to seek his fortune in films and achieved great success. He was to co-star with Crosby in the 1938 film, "Sing You Sinners".

(133) FOOL ME SOME MORE (Haven Gillespie; Peter DeRose) Vic PBVE 61047-3
Gus Arnheim & his Cocoanut Grove Orchestra

Holzhaus and Green (tpts) lead the first chorus and through most of the arrangement. A short trombone solo commences a verse that precedes Crosby's vocal and the final chorus has an attractive sax obbligato with the band playing melody support before the trumpets return to finish on a high note. The band and Crosby make the most of a no more than ordinary tune. Bing's phrasing, in an easy swinging style, is very musical. He doesn't

seem too worried about being fooled and, sounding almost flippant, knows that he'll "even the score"; almost conversationally he tells us that he "kind of likes taking her back". He starts the last eight bars with mild extemporisation as though finding it hard to resist breaking into a jauntier rhythm.

The song achieved no lasting success.

(134) IT MUST BE TRUE (Gordon Clifford-Gus Arnheim; Harry Barris) Vic PBVE 61048-3
Gus Arnheim & his C G Orchestra

An enthusiastic performance of Jimmy Grier's arrangement has the first chorus featuring a trombone solo backed by the strings and an added piano-accordion can faintly be heard; a verse includes attractive interplay between trumpet and reeds. Crosby's vocal, sung with a light tenor quality, is followed by his whistling another chorus for good measure. The band, featuring descending trumpet chords, resumes for sixteen bars with Bing returning for the last half of the final chorus.

In his autobiographical album (1954) Crosby said that Harry Barris wrote "a very clever little obbligato" to go with the song "If I Could Be With You" which Bing sang at the Grove. "The obbligato started catching on", said Bing, "so he got Clifford to write some lyrics and the first thing they knew they had a hit on their hands." The lyrics, uninspired but adequate if the cliches ("shady nook", "beneath the stars above", "I held your hand") are ignored, certainly gave Bing an opportunity for an impassioned, triumphant finish with "You are mine, all mine". His singing and whistling, mostly straight but with some variations, trilling and staccato phrases, greatly helped to popularise the song and it was recorded by many bands on both sides of the Atlantic. Neither did the song in any way diminish Crosby's own growing reputation and he made other recordings of it on 3rd April, 1939 and on 21st April, 1954.

In the film, "Dream House", Bing sang this song in blackface and costume as required by the trite plot.

Film: "Dream House" (Mack Sennett: 1931) (Bing Crosby)
Film: "The Eddy Duchin Story" (Columbia: 1956) (Tyrone Power, Kim Novak) (Based upon the life story of Eddy Duchin)

20th Nov 1930(Hollywood)

(135) THEM THERE EYES (William Tracey, Doris Tauber, Maceo Pink) Vic PBVE 61057-3
Gus Arnheim & his C G Orchard
Three Rhythm Boys

The first twelve notes that form the introduction are the same as the first twelve of Edvard Grieg's "Morning Mood" from his Peer Gynt Suite No.1 (op 46) and the pastoral effect has absolutely nothing to do with what follows. The band plays a chorus in which the trombone leads after the bridge. Two vocal choruses follow, supported by "slapped" bass, the first by the trio singing in harmony with a few minor time changes, the second a hot scat chorus in which Barris takes the lead and Bing having just one solo scat line. The band plays a brisk verse and chorus with strong rhythmic support, offering some melody variations and a solid tuba backing.

This, the final recording of the Rhythm Boys, was typical of the work they had done over the past few years and a worthy effort. Crosby recorded the song again in June, 1976.

The song, perhaps faintly echoing the sentiment if not the idiom of W S Gilbert's admonition to take a pair of sparkling eyes, ("they sparkle, they bubble") became very popular with recordings by artists as widely varied as Quintet of the Hot Club of France and Johnny Mercer. The biggest hit of all was made by Billie Holiday and it was featured in the film based upon her life story.

Film: "Lady Sings The Blues" (Paramount:1972) (Diana Ross, Billy Dee Williams) (The story of Billie Holiday)

(136) THE LITTLE THINGS IN LIFE (Irving Berlin) Vic PBVE 61058
Gus Arnheim & his C G Orchestra

Unissued takes were recorded on this date but the one issued (take 7) was probably recorded on 25th November (q.v.)

25th Nov 1930(Hollywood)

(137) THE LITTLE THINGS IN LIFE (Irving Berlin) Vic PBVE 61058-7
Gus Arnheim & his C G Orchestra

Previous takes had been recorded on 20th November but were not issued and it is probable that take 7 was recorded five days later. A muted trombone solo is featured in the first 16 bars of the opening chorus and the

brass section leads in the last 16 bars. After a verse by the band, Bing takes his refrain before the band returns for the final chorus. The arrangement is routine and the performance is unexceptionable but Bing does the lyrics more justice than they deserve; his appealing vocal is supported by strings and the rhythm section.

The song never achieved anything although Crosby included an extract from it in a short medley of Berlin songs for the soundtrack of the film "Blue Skies". Indeed, Berlin uses the title adjective no less than eleven times in the lyrics (a baby is "a little thing that cries") and seems content that this should be regarded as an unimportant trifle from the pen of a master. The potted philosophy that it purveys is now archive material.

Film: "Blue Skies" (Paramount:1945) (Bing Crosby, Fred Astaire)
Film: "Lover Come Back" (1946)

1931

After a disagreement with the Cocoanut Grove management about their not infrequent failure to arrive on time, the Rhythm Boys decided to terminate their partnership. Al Rinker's show business career waned and he became a radio producer; Harry Barris became the composer of several very successful songs and pursued a steady, if unspectacular, livelihood in films.

Bing Crosby's recording career, begun so inauspiciously in October 1926, received further stimulus when he signed for Brunswick as a solo artist. The recordings show that his voice had developed a jazz-tinged emotionalism that implied a deep sincerity. Freed from the shackles of dance band tempos he was able to give full expression to lyrics. He fulfilled his contract with Mack Sennett by making six two-reel films. Bing's elder brother, Everett, became his business manager and he arranged a radio contract with CBS. Bing's first coast-to-coast solo broadcast was on 2nd September and its success resulted in a regular daily fifteen minute programme and sponsorship by Cremo Cigars. His rapidly growing national popularity enabled Everett to book him into the Paramount Theatre, New York, where he opened in November under a ten weeks' contract at $2,500 per week. His success (at the same venue as his failure with Al Rinker in 1927) was so pronounced that the contract was extended for a record breaking run of twenty-nine weeks and his salary increased to $4,000 per week.

19th Jan 1931(Hollywood)

(138) I SURRENDER, DEAR (Gordon Clifford-Bing Crosby; Harry Barris) Vic PBVE 61068-2
Gus Arnheim & his C G Orchestra

Jimmy Grier's over-complicated arrangement for this recording is a patchwork of several styles and entirely unpredictable. The introduction develops into concert type reminiscent of Ferde Grofe, the verse changes to dance tempo and leads to a chorus containing jazz breaks by trumpet and clarinet before Crosby's unblemished, artless vocal with gentle strings adding to his plea; then back to short trombone and clarinet solos, concert arrangement, dance tempo and faster staccato rhythm before Bing returns to reprise the last two lines and bring the recording to its conclusion. It is almost impossible to keep a tally of all the modulations and tempo variations; there are so many and it was all so unusual that 1931 listeners might well have been puzzled by its orchestral intentions. The paying public must, however, have liked what they heard for it succeeded beyond all expectation and sales, including LP's, are over one million. The reason, of course, was not hard to find: this was, arguably, the first really great Crosby ballad and it helped to place him among the foremost of popular singers. It is recognised as being one of the earliest Crosby classics and one that set him firmly on the way to stardom. His voice revealed an unprecedented sensitivity with a tessitura husky and unpolished; a voice that was to make redundant the usual smooth tenor voice of dance band vocalists and, in this case, a voice that transcended the vagaries of the hotch-potch accompaniment.

Nearly a quarter of a century later Crosby said, "Harry Barris and Gordon Clifford wrote a real good tune. Jimmy Grier made a fine arrangement. It was a big, big milestone for me." He did not mention his own contribution of assisting with the lyrics nor that Barris composed the melody from Crosby's vocal variations on "Lover Come Back To Me". He must have liked it for he sang the song, or part of it, in four films. In "College Humor" he included it in a classroom medley when, as a Professor, he lectured on "Great Love Scenes From Drama". The song became very popular at the Cocoanut Grove and a story, possibly apocryphal, was that when Bing and Dixie Lee quarrelled he would sing this to her over the radio or 'phone to effect a reconciliation.

Shortly after brother Everett became Bing's manager he sent a copy of this recording and that of "Just One More Chance" (recorded 4th May, 1931) to William Paley, President of CBS. Paley then asked Everett to bring Bing to New York which resulted in the first Crosby coast-to-coast broadcast (2nd September, 1931).

Bing also recorded the song on 31st March, 1939, 24th April, 1954 and June, 1976. A great many other recordings of the song include those by Louis Armstrong, Erroll Garner, Mel Torme, Oscar Peterson and Rosemary Clooney.

Film: "I Surrender Dear" (Mack Sennett: 1931) (Bing Crosby)
Film: "One More Chance" (Mack Sennett: 1931) (Bing Crosby)
Film: "The Big Broadcast" (Paramount: 1932) (Bing Crosby)
Film: "College Humor" (Paramount: 1933) (Bing Crosby, Jack Oakie, Mary Carlisle, Richard Arlen)

2nd Mar 1931(Hollywood)

(139) THANKS TO YOU (Grant Clarke; Pete Wendling) Vic PBVE 61075-1
Gus Arnheim & his C G Orchestra

A single trombone note commences an attractive introduction and the same instrument solos the opening four bars of the first chorus which then offers a changing sound pattern from the different band sections. A verse and piano break lead to the vocal in which Bing is supported by Nelson Hall (gtr) much in the style of Eddie Lang. Another chorus from the band ends with a drum roll and brass chords finale. Played throughout in fox-trot tempo the arrangement, if not in any way unusual, is a good example of its kind but it is the Crosby vocal that was, and still is, the real attraction. The melody is superior to many that are more well known but the lyrics are made to sound better than their true worth by Crosby's rendition. Each phrase is caressingly delivered with exactly the right emphasis (his "dreams came true" must have been a model for the copyists) as though they were from the Book of Golden Verse. It is a remarkable performance from the days when dance band singers were expected to be participants rather than initiators.

(140) ONE MORE TIME (B G De Sylva - Lew Brown; Ray Henderson) Vic PBVE 61076-2
Gus Arnheim & his C G Orchestra

The opening bars are a true indication of what follows in this jaunty number. The ensemble playing is brisk and each soloist thrusts forward only to be succeeded by another, all eager to be involved. Trombone, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet all announce their presence and Crosby almost literally bursts upon the scene with "Ah, ma pretty baby, b-boo, one more time". He is firmly supported by the string bass, which is prominent throughout, and by a stylish, varied and unobtrusive instrumentation. The

band plays another sprightly chorus with trumpet and trombone passages to conclude the recording. It is probably the nearest thing to jazz that was achieved by Arnheim's orchestra and the vocal by Crosby, in good voice and great form, is a precursor of such as "I'm An Old Cowhand" (17.7.36) and "Walking The Floor Over You" (27.5.42). A comparison between this and the previous recording shows a clear indication of his ability to handle, with increasing ease, contrasting material.

The title phrase is used here a long time before Count Basie adopted it as a war-cry for repetitive choruses. The song became popular and was recorded by most of the bands.

Film: "The Best Things In Life Are Free" (20th C-Fox:1956) (Ernest Borgnine, Gordon Macrae, Dan Dailey) (This film was a highly fictionalised story of De Sylva, Brown and Henderson)

(141) WRAP YOUR TROUBLES IN DREAMS (Ted Koehler - Billy Moll; Harry Barris) Vic PBVE 61077-2
Gus Arnheim & his C G Orchestra

This was issued under Bing Crosby's name and was a solo recording on which he was accompanied by the strings section of Arnheim's orchestra and by Harry Barris (pno). The verse and two choruses form a curiously uneven performance in a semi-conversational style. In the second chorus Bing improvises from the melody line and includes three short whistling passages. Although it cannot be numbered among his best efforts to date the fact that it sold well must be regarded as a tribute to his growing popularity. The tune, by Barris, is a good one but Koehler, a most reputable lyricist, and Moll failed on this occasion to match the melodic mood. (The lyrics of this philosophical remedy for 1931 depressions would have been better suited to a brighter tune, e.g."Meet The Sun Halfway" (12.4.40)).

In the Mack Sennett film Bing sang the song in an encampment scene where Indian maidens giggled their appreciation.

The song was recorded again by Crosby on 9th June, 1939, 21st April, 1954 and June, 1976. It was also recorded by Frankie Laine.

Film: "One More Chance" (Mack Sennett: 1931) (Bing Crosby)
Film: "Rainbow 'Round My Shoulder" (Columbia: 1952) (Frankie Laine)

(142) JUST A GIGOLO (Irving Caesar; Julius Brammer: Leonello Casucci) Vic PBVE 61078-2
Gus Arnheim & his C G Orchestra

Who's for a wallow in self-commiseration? This was the recording that accompanied "Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams" to be issued under Bing

Crosby's name. He is again supported by the Arnheim strings and Harry Barris (pno) and a clarinet is added. Strings and piano establish the melancholy mood and a verse by Bing sets the "French Cafe" scene and introduces a "hero of the war". The third person lyrics are sung with some restraint but the gigolo's own words are expressed more emotionally in the chorus that follows. The small orchestra then takes a chorus, with clarinet melody lead for the first half, before Bing returns for another heartfelt and emotive chorus.

Originally a German song, "Schoner Gigolo", with words by Brammer, it was copyrighted in 1929 and translated by Caesar, a distinguished lyricist, in 1930. On this occasion, unlike the previous recording, the words exactly matched the poignancy of the melody and although perhaps not the type of song that the depressed people of 1931 wanted particularly to hear it achieved popularity because of its appealing melody and Crosby's rendition. The gigolo's introspective self-pity, not attractive in itself, is projected by Crosby with a pathos to move the most indurate; each phrase, each word, is given exactly the right emphasis as the voice catches, clings and cries in *argumentum ad misericordiam* on a theme similar to that adopted,with a change of gender, by Cole Porter for his "Love For Sale" (1930). It is a story of hopeless degradation and Crosby tells it movingly with some stunning lines. His "If you admire me, hire me .... better days" and "Then what will they say about me" are but two examples of how he wrings emotion from simple phrases. Even if the story and plumbing the depths of doom and gloom do not actually bring a moist eye, Bing brings to the saga a strange fascination. Sales of the recording have now reached more than a million.

Many other recordings were made of the song, among them those by Harry Richman, Louis Armstrong, numerous dance bands (Jack Hylton's was issued as "Handsome Gigolo"), a jazz version by the Raymond Scott Orchestra (1939), a swing version by Les Brown's Orchestra (1949), Wild Bill Davison and a "sweet" performance by Vincent Lopez and his Orchestra.

30th Mar 1931(Los Angeles)

(143) OUT OF NOWHERE (Edward Heyman; John W Green) Bru LA 983-A
Studio Orchestra

This was Bing Crosby's first recording session under his contract with Brunswick as a solo artist and it produced two good ballads in the style that was to become familiar the world over. Here, he sings a chorus and verse gradually building to a climactic second chorus. The musical phrasing is all, transcending lapses in literary interpretation (e.g. pauses between

"made every hour"/"sweet as a flower", "if you should go"/"back to your nowhere", "each dream of mine"/"come true", "leaving me with"/"a memory").

Johnny Green, who became an orchestra conductor, was not a prolific composer but Heyman was an important lyricist. Of the songs that they wrote together the best known was "Body And Soul" but "Out Of Nowhere" achieved a deserved popularity that was revived in the late 1940's when it became a favourite of the avant-garde jazz musicians. It was recorded by Ruth Etting, Pee Wee Russell, Art Tatum, Jack Teagarden, Patti Page, Vic Damone, Roy Fox (Al Bowlly vocal), Ambrose (vocal by Sam Browne), Geraldo, Charlie Parker and its composer, John W Green, made a piano recording. Other compositions used its chord structure including "In From Somewhere" (Bill Usselton), "Roundhouse" (Gerry Mulligan) and "Jayne" (Ornette Coleman).

Crosby's recording sold over a million and he recorded the song again on 16th June, 1954. He also sang it in one of the Mack Sennett film shorts. In "The Joker Is Wild" Frank Sinatra, in his role of comedian Joe E Lewis, sang a parody of the song.

Film: "Dude Ranch" (Paramount: 1931)
Film: "I Surrender Dear" (Mack Sennett: 1931) (Bing Crosby)
Film: "You Came Along" (Paramount: 1945) (Lizabeth Scott, Robert Cummings)
Film: "The Joker Is Wild" (Paramount: 1957) (Frank Sinatra, Mitzi Gaynor) (Based upon the life of comedian Joe E Lewis)
Film: "The Rat Race" (Paramount: 1959) (Tony Curtis, Debbie Reynolds)

(144) IF YOU SHOULD EVER NEED ME (Al Dubin; Joseph Burke) Bru LA 984-A
Studio Orchestra

The uninspired, barely adequate, orchestra introduces Bing offering a lost love his enduring loyalty in this, his second Brunswick solo recording. He raises the song to a level above its worth with a verse, chorus and reprised half chorus. The last line of the verse is especially well delivered and the whole first chorus (with the exception of a jarring pause between "but still if you" and "should ever need me") proves his mastery over the commonplace. The orchestra then plods its way through half a chorus. The vocal reprise is sung more dramatically in a slightly hoarsened voice holding just a hint of suppressed tremor to convey his feeling and the last assuring line, "You'll always find me here", admirably controlled, has that comforting dip on "me" that was to become such an appealing mannerism of the Crosby style.

Dubin, who had many film song successes, and Burke wrote many hit songs together and with other collaborators but this was not one of their better efforts.

1st May 1931(Hollywood)

On this day Bing Crosby held his final recording session as a dance band vocalist.

(145) HO HUM! (Edward Heyman; Dana Suesse) Vic PBVE 61091-2
Gus Arnhein & his C G Orchestra
Loyce Whiteman

This was Crosby's penultimate recording with the Arnheim orchestra and his first recorded duet with a female singer. The band swings lightly throughout, the first chorus and verse arranged in typical Arnheim style for brass and reeds. The vocal duet follows with both singers entirely at ease - they had, of course, sung together many times at the Cocoanut Grove - before the band resumes with another happy chorus ("bells", swinging trumpet solo and muted trombone) and the duettists conclude with a last stanza. The duet consists almost entirely of alternate lines being sung by Bing and Loyce.

This light, cheerful souffle with its elementary rhymes was a speciality that the singers found undemanding. Loyce Whiteman (no relation to Paul and who married Harry Barris) had the modest, pleasing voice of a competent band singer but the song needed nothing more. Its composer, Dana Suesse, was a classical pianist and in 1932 played at Carnegie Hall with Paul Whiteman and a symphony orchestra. In addition to classical compositions she wrote a few popular songs that were successful.

Film: "Monkey Business" (Paramount: 1931) (Marx Brothers)

(146) I'M GONNA GET YOU (Harry Tobias;Jules Lemare-Gus Arnheim) Vic PBVE 61092-2
Gus Arnheim & his C G Orchestra

A sparkling introduction and chorus by the tightly knit band provide a typical Arnheim sound with trombone and trumpet leading and the reeds section, with cascading clarinet, in support. The band continues with a verse that includes breaks by saxophone and clarinet and leads to the vocal chorus. The band resumes for the final chorus, with some departure

from the melody line, and trumpet and piano make statements before Bing reprises the last two lines.

This was Crosby's last recording as a dance band vocalist. From his first declamatory "I'm gonna get you", his interpolated "cos I'll never stand for that" and the vintage rhythmic phrasing, to his last-line variations of tempo and melody he is demonstrating that he is more than ready for solo work. The limited range of the tune irks him into thrusting beyond its restraints and it hardly matters that his final note is not well delivered and is almost inaudible. (He was to do this better in later years, e.g. "Alabamy Bound" (14.3.57)). It is indicative of his desire to seek fresh outlets for a style that was streets ahead of his contemporaries.

The song was not an outstanding one (apart from Tobias' tensile pun, "but love's elastic, please stretch a point, dear, for me") but dance bands featured and recorded it as a "bouncy" number. Harry Tobias was the eldest of the three successful songwriting brothers.

4th May 1931(Los Angeles)

(147) WERE YOU SINCERE? (Jack Meskill; Vincent Rose) Bru LA 1036-A
Studio Orchestra

Although the orchestra has often been regarded as being conducted by Victor Young it is uncertain as at some time during 1931 he was in New York conducting on network radio. If, however, he was the conductor on this recording it was his first with Bing Crosby. The orchestra, sounding dreadfully passe, opens with scratchy strings and piano before the singer takes a verse and chorus. The orchestra returns for half a chorus with Bing reprising the second half.

Even handicapped by a cold, laryngitis and a backing that afforded no inspiration there is no doubting Crosby's own nasal sounding sincerity. His verse is accompanied by piano with the strings joining for the chorus. Bing's phrasing is occasionally a little disconcerting (an abrupt pause in the middle of the line "that night we met beneath the moon", the breath between "broken" and "heart") but he achieves a fine musical veracity with some additional emphasis and slight improvisation on the reprised lines.

Jack Meskill, at one time a professional baseball player, had some early successes as a lyricist and this song had some passing popularity. It was also recorded by Gene Autry.

Film: "Billboard Girl" (Mack Sennett: 1931) (Bing Crosby)

(148) JUST ONE MORE CHANCE (Sam Coslow; Arthur Johnston) Bru LA 1037-A
Studio Orchestra

Crosby sings a chorus, orchestrally accompanied, a short verse with piano and a reprised chorus in his greatest success to date and what was forever afterwards regarded as a paramount landmark in his career. The significance of the recording is inestimable in its far reaching effect after Everett Crosby sent a copy of it to William Paley (see "I Surrender, Dear" (19.1.31)). The nasality resulting from his laryngeal cold is more pronounced than in the immediately preceding recording but there is no detraction from either the emotional or musical content. Many years later, referring to the song as a "solemn musical appeal", he gave credit for its success to the composers and said, "with this kind of material laid in your lap a singer has just got to move unless he's completely tone-deaf, adenoidal and doesn't like music". The characteristic modesty cannot, however, conceal his unique musical phrasing, his timbre and his departures into new realms of popular singing with, as in the reprised chorus, a mixture of lyrics, "b-b-boo" and whistling. Minor blemishes of literary phrasing are unimportant; nothing matters but the powerful, impassioned delivery taking him beyond the show business antics of Jolson and the banalities of Vallee. Listeners were exposed to a depth of feeling rarely experienced outside the world of Italian operatic singers. Adolescents and adults alike were attracted to the new "romantic balladeer", which his four Brunswick solos to date were branding him. Women found him exciting and young men found an imitative target; couldn't anyone, without any requisite training, sing like this? For here, virtually, was a prototype recording for aspiring males: the virility, the sob and throb, the sigh and cry (without doom and gloom) and the "b-b-b-boo" and whistling that would become audible Crosby logos. The public loved it enough for the recording to become a million seller.

Composers Coslow and Johnston were to write many of Bing's early film hits but this, written in 1927, was, mainly through Crosby's rendition, among the most popular. At the age of sixteen Johnston had been hired by Irving Berlin to arrange and transcribe his songs, Berlin being able to play in only one key.

Crosby, with an obvious attachment to the song - he sang it on his first coast-to-coast broadcast on 2nd September, 1931, a recording of which was commercially issued many years after the event - also recorded it on 9th June, 1939, 21st April, 1954 and June, 1976. Many other artists and bands recorded the song and Rosemary Clooney included it in a 1978 Crosby commemorative album.

In the film "College Humor" Bing included the song in a classroom medley when, as a Professor, he lectured on "Great Love Scenes From Drama". In "Paper Moon" this recording of 4th May, 1931 was used on the soundtrack.

Film: "One More Chance" (Mack Sennett: 1931) (Bing Crosby)
Film: "College Humour" (Paramount: 1933) (Bing Crosby, Jack Oakie, Mary Carlisle, Richard Arlen)
Film: "College Coach" (Warner Bros: 1933)
Film: "The Stooge" (Paramount: 1951) (Dean Martin, Jerry Lewis)
Film: "Paper Moon" (Paramount: 1973) (Ryan O'Neil, Tatum O'Neil)

12th June 1931(Los Angeles)

(149) I'M THROUGH WITH LOVE (Gus Kahn; Matty Malneck - Fud Livingston)
Studio Orchestra — Bru LA 1024-A

A short, stolid introduction by the small orchestra and a couple of bars from piano leads to a verse and chorus by Bing in which he expresses disillusionment after his loved one has gone on her "merry way": he is "through with love". An orchestral half chorus and a reprise of the second half by Bing concludes the recording. The orchestral arrangement is plodding and unimaginative with no attempt to depart from the melody line but in his full chorus Crosby delays his entry on some lines by half a beat effectively creating a musical nuance. Two lines in the reprise are sung with orchestra *tacit* which gives a dramatic effect to the "deep emotion" and he finishes with a slower, tender phrase. It is a well constructed vocal although the pause taken between "you had your share" and "of slaves around you" may now be considered doubly unfortunate.

The label credit of an early Australian issue of this recording was attributed to "Owen Cornell". This and "I Found A Million Dollar Baby", recorded on the same day, are the only two known instances of Crosby recordings being issued under a pseudonym.

Composer Fud Livingston was a jazz clarinet and sax player with many of the leading bands (Pollack, Goldkette, Shilkret, Garber, Elizalde, Jimmy Dorsey) and noted for his "hot" arrangements. He was later responsible for musical arrangements in many of Crosby's radio shows. Matty Malneck, a Paul Whiteman violinist, later led his own band.

The song was featured by Bing on his first coast-to coast radio programme on 2nd September, 1931 (q.v.). Although it was recorded by many artists and dance bands of the day (and later by Nat "King" Cole, Dinah Shore, Sarah Vaughan and Coleman Hawkins) the song was not outstanding and Kahn's lyric not among his better achievements.

Film: "With A Song In My Heart" (20th C-Fox: 1952) (Susan Hayward, David Wayne) (Based on the life of Jane Froman who recorded the songs for the soundtrack)

(150) MANY HAPPY RETURNS OF THE DAY (Al Dubin; Joseph Burke) — Bru LA 1042-A
Studio Orchestra

In the same format as the preceding recording the verse concisely sets the scene of the forlorn and deserted lover who, in the chorus, almost rends himself in despair. Apparently, however, the lady's marriage is a happy one, a condition one hopes will bring some consolation to the forsaken well-wisher. Crosby's performance, archetypal "early Bing", so effectively stresses key words (e.g."<u>still</u> send you luck") and so musically well-phrased is instantly appealing and he shows his inherent gift for building to a climax. The orchestral half chorus is this time accompanied by Bing's robust whistling which, if not entirely appropriate to the general despondency, is not unremittingly cheerful. While seeming to pay little heed to lyric phrases (pauses in the title line and "I won't bring any presents to you", for instance, are awkward) his musical feeling is expressed superbly and the last two lines, lingering on significant words is pure early Crosby.

If the marriage of the lady in question was indeed a happy one it was not more so than the marriage of Dubin's lyric and Burke's sentimental waltz tune which became very popular.

In the cartoon film a few lines were sung and whistled by someone imitating Crosby.

Film (Cartoon): "Crosby, Columbo and Vallee" (Warner Bros: 1932)

(151) I FOUND A MILLION DOLLAR BABY (Billy Rose - Mort Dixon; Harry Warren)
Studio Orchestra — Bru LA 1043-B

Bing sings a chorus before the orchestra stands aside and leaves him to continue the verse with only piano accompaniment. The orchestra then returns for a final chorus in which the singer hums and scats through the first half and repeats the lyrics in the bridge and last stanza. It is a finely contrasted effort by Crosby: the straight first chorus, the gently confiding verse and the final, well varied, exuberant chorus. Perhaps all that is lacking is a few whistled bars in a number that would have contained them more appropriately than did the previous recording. No matter, this is very acceptable as it stands with Crosby's humming and scat obbligato to the orchestra's melody line, the delightful interpolation of "incidentally" after the bridge and the improvisation in the last eight bars.

The significance of this recording has not been fully recognised. Although Crosby had previously sung up-tempo numbers on many occasions they had all been as a band vocalist or with the Rhythm Boys. All solo recordings had been ballads and his rising reputation from the commencement of his

Brunswick contract was being founded on his ability to handle such material. The success, then, of this first solo in a lighter, carefree, rhythmic style, a departure from the guise of ardent swain or love-sick reject, as well as being a welcome change from his former lamentations must have given him confidence that the buying public accepted him in the new role. Almost certainly, sales figures have exceeded a million. Unfortunately it was a few months before he again attempted such a venture but it is possible that if this had failed to interest the customers and he had remained categorised solely as a balladeer future gems ("Dinah", "Sweet Georgia Brown", etc) might never have been cut.

Label credits of early Australian issues of the recording were attributed to "Owen Cornell" and "Arthur Beaumont" which, together with "I'm Through With Love" recorded earlier on the same day, are the only known instances of Crosby recordings being issued under a pseudonym. The "Arthur Beaumont" name appeared on Embassy, a label used by the chain of Cole's Stores which had purchased from Brunswick the right to use the material but not the true name of the artist. How this artifice could decieve anyone, given Crosby's unique style, is impossible to imagine.

The song may be considered a "commercial" for Woolworth's and its bargains ("nothing over sixpence" (UK) "dime" (USA)) for if diamond bracelets weren't available (as Bing recorded on 26th June, 1953) it seemed that even more favourable transactions were on offer. It was a great success for the composers, the first Harry Warren song that Bing recorded and it became widely popular. He recorded it again on 10th July, 1940 and June,1976. Warren probably wrote more hits for films than any other composer and won three "Oscars" yet never received the publicity and acclaim that he deserved. Billy Rose, husband of Fanny Brice, was a famous producer, showman and night club and theatre owner.

In the 1931 show the song, featured by Fanny Brice, was the hit of the show. The film "Funny Lady" was a sequel to "Funny Girl", both films being based on the life of Fanny Brice.

Show: "Crazy Quilt" (Billy Rose Prodn: 1931) (Fanny Brice, Ted Healy, Phil Baker)
Film: "A Million Dollar Baby" (Monogram: 1935)
Film: "Funny Lady" (Columbia: 1975) (Barbra Streisand, James Caan, Omar Sharif)
Film: "City Heat" (Warner Bros: 1984) (Burt Reynolds, Clint Eastwood)

(152) HOW THE TIME CAN FLY (Walter Donaldson) Bru LA 1044
Studio Orchestra

This recording of one of Donaldson's lesser known songs was never issued.

24th June 1931(Los Angeles)

(153) AT YOUR COMMAND (Harry Tobias-Bing Crosby; Harry Barris) Bru LA 1051-A-B
Harry Barris (pno)

In a return to his role of repentant lover (after dallying with "a new love") Crosby vows with all the sincerity and contrition at his command to "live forever" at her command. With persuasion like this it is difficult to see how she could resist such a powerful plea from that seductive voice; the beguiling "Please understand I'm here forever" is irresistible. Unfortunately, however, whilst the musical phrasing allures there seems a curious disregard for any sense that the lyrics hold. Admittedly the melody line, comprised mainly of short sequences, doesn't flow and gives no help but Bing does little to alleviate awkward pauses when he could have held a note to give a phrase more credibilty (e.g. "your love dreams - I shattered - beyond recall", "how can I live - this way"). There are many more examples and even the title line suffers by a break between the second and third words. If the voice was all that mattered to his growing, adoring and uncritical following an attentive listener could be irritated by the distractions. Barris plays a few introductory bars, accompanies Bing's verse and chorus, returns for a solo half-chorus with some dramatic flourishes and accompanies the final half-chorus vocal in which Bing sings one different line from the first chorus. Opinions may differ about whether the high note "big finish" was necessary.

After Harry Tobias heard Bing sing "I Surrender Dear", on radio with Gus Arnheim's Orchestra, he conceived the idea of this song as a follow up. Barris, at the Cocoanut Grove, introduced him to Crosby and the next day the three met at Barris' home to write the song, Bing assisting with the lyrics. The result seems to have been the work of an *ad hoc* committee in which the melody was rather hastily and clumsily written to fit previously designed lyrics. In 1932 an injunction was sought by Serge Walter and Ross Mobley, who had written a song, "Jealous", that "At Your Command" was an infringement of their 1924 copyright but the suit was unsuccessful.

The takes are very similar but can be identified in the verse when, on take A, Bing pauses between "mistaken" and "awakened"; there is no such pause on take B.

Gus Arnheim and his Orchestra also recorded the song and, interestingly, Gordon Macrae later chose to record it.

Film: "I Surrender Dear" (Mack Sennett: 1931) (Bing Crosby)

19th Aug 1931(New York)

This was Crosby's first authenticated recording session with Victor Young and was made shortly after Bing and Everett Crosby arrived in New York. Young's orchestra was to accompany Bing on more recordings than any other orchestra with the sole exception of John Scott Trotter's. The personnel changed through the years but during the early 1930's variously included:
Bob Effros, Bunny Berigan, Sterling Bose, Frank Guarante (tpts) Tommy Dorsey, Charlie Butterfield, Jack Teagarden (tbns); Jimmy Dorsey, Larry Binyon, Chester Hazlett, Arnold Brilhart, Mutt Hayes (reeds); Joe Venuti, Harry Hoffman, Walter Edelstein, Lou Kosloff (vlns) Arthur Schutt, Joe Moresco (pno); Eddie Lang, Dick McDonough, Carl Kress, Frank Worrell, Perry Botkin (gtr); Joe Tarto, Hank Stern, Artie Bernstein (bs); Chauncey Morehouse, Larry Gomar, Stan King (dms)

(154) I APOLOGISE (Al Hoffman - Ed Nelson; Al Goodhart) Bru E 37085-A
Victor Young & his Orchestra

A trumpet leads the introduction to a verse and chorus sung perceptively and with conversational initimacy supported by a sympathetic accompaniment. The orchestra takes over, rather more forcefully, for eight bars of the second chorus before Bing returns, humming and "dah-di-dah" for the next eight bars, and singing a reprise of the bridge and final eight bars. The simple lyrics excellently fit an ordinary tune; the breaks fall in the correct places to make good sense and Crosby's rendition raises the appeal of the song above its true artistic worth. The warmth and appeal of his reprise delivery of the line "After all we were more than friends" followed by an ardent plea for pardon (well backed by the orchestra) is an example of how he was setting new trends and raising the level of musical interpretation in the field of popular music.

Although this recording found favour the song failed to achieve permanent popularity. An attempt to revive it in the 1960's was unsuccessful. Others who recorded the song included Kate Smith, Billy Eckstine, Anita O'Day and the orchestras of Nat Shilkret and Phil Spitalny.

(155) DANCING IN THE DARK (Howard Dietz; Arthur Schwartz) Bru E 37086-A
Victor Young & his Orchestra

This was Crosby's first solo attempt at a Broadway show tune and proved a faultless choice by whoever was responsible. Taking it at just the

right tempo, this much-loved song is given restrained treatment by the singer. Bing sings first the chorus, then verse, before a final chorus that alternates between him and the orchestra with solos by trumpet - terminating rather abruptly as if under-rehearsed - and violin (Joe Venuti). Crosby's phrasing, as we have now come to expect, is musically sound and even a couple of careless line interpretations ("Time hurries by, we're here and gone" and "we can be young") do little to diminish an otherwise excellent performance that includes such beautifully sung lines as the last two in the verse ("make yours ---- that we're one").

The song was the biggest commercial success of one of the best composer partnerships. With its lingering melody and ethereal, alliterative lyrics it has been justly regarded as an early example upon which the better musical form of the period was based. Many recordings of the song have been made by artists as diverse as operatic soprano Gladys Swarthout and clarinetist and swing band leader Artie Shaw; recordings by dance bands and popular singers are legion.

In the show for which it was written it was sung by John Barker as Tilly Losch danced on mirrored floors. Adele Astaire made her last appearance before retiring to marry Lord Charles Cavendish and leave brother Fred to pursue a solo career

Show: "The Band Wagon" (1931) (Fred & Adele Astaire, Frank Morgan, Tilly Losch, Helen Broderick)
Film: "Dancing In The Dark" (20th C-Fox: 1949) (William Powell, Adolphe Menjou)
Film: "The Band Wagon" (MGM: 1953) (Fred Astaire, Jack Buchanan, Cyd Charisse, Nanette Fabray, Oscar Levant)
Film: "Husbands" (Columbia: 1970)(Peter Falk, Ben Gazzara)

(156) STAR DUST (Mitchell Parish;Hoagy Carmichael) Bru E37087-A
Victor Young & his Orchestra

The bewitching star dust is sprinkled right from the orchestral introduction with its tinkling triangle. Bing sings a straight verse and chorus before a final half chorus is given variable treatment, four lines taken alternately by alt sax and the singer ("dah-di-di-dah"), four bars from the orchestra, Bing whistles a couple of bars and sings the last line. It is a performance to leave admirers starry-eyed and has only minor flaws (an awkward pause in the first line of the chorus and a poor delivery of the word "refrain" - but when he reprises the last line the word is held much better) other than that the wordless vocalising effectively destroys the wistfulness. Bing handles the song affectionately, the phrases tripping delightfully; a particularly well sung line is "though I dream -- will remain" with an effective portamento on "vain".

In his autobiographical album (1954) Bing said that he had been asked a thousand times about what was his favourite song and that his answer never varied. (If this was not strictly accurate it is easy, with his tremendous repertoire, to forgive an inevitable memory lapse. It has been researched that over the years he quoted at least fifteen songs as being his favourite; and why not?) "That wonderful, dreamy classic .. yep "Stardust"", he said. It is, indeed, a wonderful song, one of the most beloved melodies. Carmichael, a jazz pianist and an old friend of Bing's from early Whiteman days, composed it in June, 1927 during a visit to his alma mater, the University of Indiana (where he had studied law), when he was inspired by a view of the starry sky. The inspiration, however, yielded a ragtime piano piece and it was not until two years later, after Victor Young had arranged it in slower tempo for Isham Jones' band, that Mitchell Parish wrote contemplative lyrics of a beauty to match the tune in a perfect blend. Although most of the praise was reserved for Carmichael the lyrics are equal to the tune and reveal a level of poetry rare in popular music; the verse, rhyming alternate lines, is redolent with yearning and the chorus that follows, mainly in blank verse, carries the mood sublimely to a "stardust melody" and the "memory of love's refrain". The evidence is that Parish chose his words with the loving care of a poet. A classic of its kind, the song has a secure place in the Guiness Book of Records as being one of the most recorded. In 1946 a radio poll, conducted by Dick Haymes on his network show, to determine the "greatest popular song" overwhelmingly gave the verdict to "Star Dust" with five times as many votes as its nearest rival.

Crosby's 1931 recording has sold over a million copies and he recorded the song again on 22nd March, 1939 and 16th June, 1954. Among the many hundreds of other recordings of the song were those by Frank Sinatra, an interesting novelty when he sang only the verse, a satirical Jonathan Edwards (Paul Weston) piano version (the satire was on "artistry", not the song), Nat "King" Cole, and Carmichael himself. In the film "Stardust Memories" Louis Armstrong's recording is heard on the soundtrack.

Film: "The Eddy Duchin Story" (Columbia: 1955) (Tyrone Power, Kim Novak) (Based on life of pianist Eddy Duchin)
Film: "Stardust Memories" (United Artists: 1980) (Woody Allen)

2nd Sep 1931(New York)

The two songs from this date were recorded by Victor, in Hollywood, from a live CBS radio show (Station WABC) in New York but it was not until 1972 that they were issued commercially (by RCA). It was Crosby's

first solo coast-to-coast broadcast, an historic event in his career that brought him immediate national popularity and led to a regular daily programme and sponsorship by Cremo Cigars. The unusual circumstances of the recordings and the lapse of time before issue brought confusion about their origin. As the broadcast from New York was relayed to the west coast through Station KHJ, "The Don Lee Station", Los Angeles, misconceptions arose years later through the announcement having been made from L.A. The accompanying orchestra was then mistakenly guessed as being that of either Victor Young or Gus Arnheim. There is also a remaining doubt about the correct master number of the first item (q.v.). The broadcast had been postponed for two days: it was announced by Harry Von Zell that a severe attack of laryingitis had made it impossible for Bing Crosby ("the sensational baritone") to appear but his voice had now sufficiently recovered. Crosby opened the fifteen minute programme with "Just One More Chance" and concluded it with "I'm Through With Love", Von Zell's closing announcement referring to him as an "exclusive Columbia artist".

The personnel of the CBS Studio Orchestra, directed by Freddie Rich, at that time included the following members but the exact composition of the band for this particular broadcast is not known:
Tommy Gott, Manny Klein, Bunny Berigan (tpts); Tommy Dorsey, Charlie Butterfield (tbns); Elmer Feldkamp, Tony Parenti, Jimmy Dorsey (reeds); Joe Venuti, Lew Conrad (vlns); Walter Gross (pno); Eddie Lang (gtr); Joe Tarto, Hank Stern (bbs); Stan King, Chauncey Morehouse (dms)

(157) JUST ONE MORE CHANCE (Sam Coslow; Arthur Johnston) Vic PCVE 68310-1
CBS Studio Orchestra (directed by Freddie Rich)

The song is presented in the same form as the recording of 4th May with only minor differences of inflection and emphasis. A notable difference, however, is that this radio offering does not include any whistling. If, vocally, the earlier recording is to be preferred the orchestral arrangement is more interesting on this occasion with Venuti (vln) giving support and interplay with Crosby on the second chorus. It may be noted that during the first chorus when Bing sings the line, "I've learned the meaning of repentance" he inserts before the first vowel the superfluous consonant "n", perhaps for the first time on record indulging a mannerism that he would frequently employ in the future. Although it was announced that Bing had suffered laryngitis there is less aural evidence of it than on the other recording of the same song when, coincidentally, he also had the same throat trouble.

Although the matrix number has sometimes been shown as PCVE

68309 it is more usually shown as PCVE 68310. The latter number was shown on the Victor file card but was also allocated, presumably inadvertently, to another recording not connected with Bing Crosby. PCVE 68311 was "I'm Through With Love" and PCVE 68312 was the entire fifteen minute broadcast. PCVE 68308 had nothing to do with the broadcast and number PCVE 68309 was omitted from the card. It is hardly conceivable that the three matrix numbers provided for the broadcast should not have been consecutive and it is possible that the non-Crosby PCVE 68310 should have been allocated the missing number, i.e. PCVE 68309.

Crosby had previously recorded the song on 4th May, 1931 (q.v.) and was to record it again on 9th June, 1939, 21st April, 1954 and in June, 1976.

(158) I'M THROUGH WITH LOVE (Gus Kahn; Matty Malneck - Fud Livingston) Vic PCVE 68311-1
CBS Studio Orchestra (dir by Freddie Rich)

This recording closed the fifteen minute broadcast and, like "Just One More Chance", the pattern was the same as the earlier recording of 12th June (q.v.). If, again, the first vocal might be given preference, the accompaniment is an improvement. Eddie Lang (gtr) gives excellent support and in the first half of the repeat chorus the trombone solo with Venuti's obbligato (vln) is a delightful interlude.

14th Sep 1931(New York)

(159) SWEET AND LOVELY (Harry Tobias-Jules Lemare; Gus Arnheim) Bru E 37156-A
Victor Young & his Orchestra

There is a well arranged introduction that includes a short solo by Sterling Bose (muted tpt) after which it is all Crosby. He sings a verse and chorus, with unobtrusive but most supportive accompaniment, and concludes with his "trade-mark" vocables and a reprise of the last couple of lines. The melody is enhanced, credence given to soppy lyrics, and Bing produces on some of the open vowels a resonant tone that would soon be endearing him to an international audience.

Unfortunately, the song itself cloys with its sugary sweetness and saccharin lyrics. If Spike Jones did not record it perhaps he should have done as it seems so ready-made for a lampoon:

"Skies above me (where else?) - never were as blue as her eyes" (where did he live - Manchester?)

"She nestles in my arms so tenderly" (that's the coo, the bill comes later)

"Taunting me, haunting me" (daunting me)

With added pistol shots, cowbells and tyre pumps Spike couldn't have failed. It is a tribute to Crosby that he could beguile with such rhetoric and ladled flattery. The last line of the lyric is apposite and welcome.

The song was again recorded by Bing on 21st April, 1954. It was written in 1931 and used by composer Arnheim for his signature tune. Other recordings were made by the Savoy Orpheans, Roy Fox (vocal by Al Bowlly), Stan Kenton and Russ Columbo who also used the it for his theme song.

Film: "Two Girls And A Sailor" (MGM: 1944) (June Allyson, Gloria de Haven, Van Johnson, Jimmy Durante, Harry James Orch)
Film: "Battleground" (MGM: 1949) (Van Johnson, John Hodiak)

6th Oct 1931(New York)

(160) NOW THAT YOU'RE GONE (Gus Kahn; Ted FioRito) Bru E37281-A
Victor Young & his Orchestra

Another song bemoaning a lost love. Subdued despair pervades the opening verse ("darkness all around me") and the gloom continues in the chorus where we find our hero contemplating the river. We do not know why he has been left alone but the intensity of the lament suggests the worst. The second chorus, the first half shared by the orchestra and singer, the second reprised by Bing, rouses the tempo to an inappropriate, Jolsonesque, stirring finish of a nondescript performance. The Crosby voice is as persuasive as ever but the tune is no more than adequate and the lyrics not among Kahn's best. Bing has an unaccountable pause in the line "I just can't carry on" and, in the reprise, he sings "n'I'm standing by" and "n'and no dawn". If this song, by pianist and band leader FioRito and German-born Kahn, did nothing to enhance Crosby's growing reputation neither did it in any way tarnish it. Its melancholy might have served its purpose as a forerunner to the far superior "Black Moonlight", recorded by Bing on 27th August, 1933.

(161) A FADED SUMMER LOVE (Phil Baxter) Bru E 37282-A
Victor Young & his Orchestra

Of all the many attainments and records achieved by Bing Crosby one

that seems to have passed unnoticed is the large number of females that left him. It couldn't have been the voice yet here is another that "left today but didn't say goodbye". A plaintive song with a well arranged accompaniment, Crosby sings first the verse and then chorus; the first sixteen bars of the second chorus alternate between orchestra, with Eddie Lang (gtr) and strings and then saxes, and Bing scatting and whistling; he reprises the final sixteen bars. It is an attractive tune that Crosby exploits in full measure; some of his phrasing is especially appealing (e.g. "that swept me ... to frost") although it must be said that during the "wa-di-dahing" and whistling his abandonment didn't appear to have left him too distressed.

Phil Baxter had a fair success with his song although the "leaves" metaphor is a little strained ("they were so in love with the breeze"). He composed only a few songs, the best known of which was "Piccolo Pete". Among others who recorded "A Faded Summer Love" were Bing's ex-employer, Paul Whiteman, Ruth Etting, Kay Starr and Teresa Brewer.

8th Oct 1931(New York)

(162) TOO LATE (Sam M Lewis; Victor Young) Bru E 37284-A
Victor Young & his Orchestra

A trumpet (possibly Tommy Dorsey) leads the orchestra, conducted by the composer, in the introduction; Bing sings the verse and then takes a chorus with the accompaniment of an undistinguished violin obbligato; the final chorus is for the first half "b-b-booed" and "dah-di-dahed" and completed with a return to the lyrics. It is difficult to imagine what Crosby did to deserve such poor material. The tune lacks charm - it sticks not so much in the memory as the gullet - and the words are banal and sometimes bizarre ("a wall that seems to cry", "I've reached love's Golden Gate", "Lovemate, I heard my heart cry for a mate") with a glaring error in the use of "don't" for "doesn't" ("love don't hesitate"). Bing does all, or even more, than might be expected with such unamusing nonsense and some lines are delivered powerfully and effectively (e.g. "a wall between ... to cry") but nothing can save the song.

Understandably, the song was not extensively recorded but Crosby's early mentor, Mildred Bailey, was one who ventured to do so.

Film: "Illegal" (Warner Bros: 1955) (Edward G Robinson, Nina Foch, Margot Grahame)

(163) GOODNIGHT SWEETHEART (Jimmy Campbell - Reg Connelly; Ray Noble)
Victor Young & his Orchestra Bru E 37285-A

If this song is not your nostalgic transport, a musical time-capsule, to pre-war days you cannot then have been around. For a decade or more it was played at every ball and dance hall and, after 1939, was inevitably followed by the perennial "last waltz", "Who's Taking You Home Tonight?". It was ideal for young, inarticulate lovers to croon as they swept round the dance floor. Crosby's version, with its intense feeling, has never been improved upon and was a tremendous success. Sounding at times slightly husky he sings with great authority, evoking all the tenderness that the words can convey; cadences in the melody (e.g. "But with the dawn"; "If we could dream forever") are beautifully delivered. After a chorus and verse he whistles, with little deviation, a half chorus accompanied by a Chester Hazlett obbligato (alt sax) and recites a couple of lines before singing the final four bars to "stop-time" accompaniment by the orchestra. It was the sort of stunning performance that advanced the art of popular singing even if, in retrospect, the recital interlude may be considered over-dramatic and the last "goodnight", in a tone vibrating with passion, a little too anguished for the occasion. (He was, after all, only saying "goodnight" and they would be meeting again on the morrow). The poignancy and sweet sorrow of the parting, however, are not disturbed.

This was Ray Noble's first big success and remains his best known and most enduring song. Born in 1903 at Hove, Sussex in England he was to find fame as a bandleader both in his homeland and the USA. The tune is reminiscent of Liszt's "Les Preludes"; the lyrics cannot but have been inspired by Juliet's famous lines even if Shakespeare did put it rather better. The words, both in verse and chorus, blend perfectly with the melody and musical and literary phrases skilfully coincide to make any singer happy. Ray Noble used the tune for his closing signature and after he and his orchestra recorded it (with an Al Bowlly vocal) most other orchestras and singers appeared on record with the song. Rudy Vallee produced an "American" version in which he amended the lyrics. He also sang it in the film "The Palm Beach Story".

The song was written in 1931 and not specifically for Carroll's Revue of 1930 but was interpolated and then included in the following year's Revue.

Show: "Earl Carroll Vanities Revue" (1930) (Jimmy Savo, Jack Benny, Patsy Kelly)
Show: "Earl Carroll Vanities Revue" (1931) (Will Mahoney, William Demarest, Lillian Roth)
Film: "The Palm Beach Story" (Paramount: 1942) (Claudette Colbert, Joel McCrea, Mary Astor, Rudy Vallee)
Film: "You Were Meant For Me" (20th C-Fox: 1948 (Jeanne Crain, Dan Dailey, Oscar Levant)

25th Oct 1931(New York)

(164) GEMS FROM GEORGE WHITE'S SCANDALS (Pt 1) (Lew Brown; Ray Henderson)
(a) This Is The Missus — Bru E 37320-A
(b) The Thrill Is Gone
(c) My Song
Victor Young & his Orchestra

The orchestra introduces the medley with a few bars from "Life Is Just A Bowl Of Cherries" and then continues with "This Is The Missus"; the Boswell Sisters sing the same song and are followed by Bing Crosby with "The Thrill Is Gone" and Frank Munn singing "My Song". After the lively tempo of the Boswells the tempo slows for the ballad that presents no difficulties for Bing, except perhaps the wretched line "Now it don't appeal to you", as he progresses to the climactic "This is the end, so why pretend" in ringing tones. A superb solo by Tommy Dorsey (tbn) reprises the melody before tenor Frank Munn's vocal that is sung melodiously but rather mechanically with a sound similar to that which was to bring popularity to Kenny Baker three or four years later.

This is first time that Crosby appeared on record with the Boswell Sisters although both contributions are entirely separate. The recording, together with Part 2 recorded on the same date, was issued on a 12" 78 rpm record.

In the show, "The Thrill Is Gone" was sung by Everett Marshall. Alice Faye, a protege of Rudy Vallee's, had a small part.

Show: "George White's Scandals" (11th Edition) (1931) (Ray Bolger, Willie & Eugene Howard, Everett Marshall, Ethel Merman, Rudy Vallee, Alice Faye)
Film: "The Best Things In Life Are Free" (20th C-Fox: 1956) (Gordon Macrae, Ernest Borgnine, Dan Dailey) (The story of De Sylva, Brown and Henderson)

(165) GEMS FROM GEORGE WHITE'S SCANDALS (Pt 2) (Lew Brown; Ray Henderson)
(a) That's Love — Bru E 37321-A
(b) That's Why Darkies Were Born
(c) Life Is Just A Bowl Of Cherries
Victor Young & his Orchestra

After a swinging version of "That's Love" by the Boswell Sisters that also features a short trumpet solo, Frank Munn sings "That's Why Darkies Were Born" (a song omitted from a later issue) before the final number is

featured successively by the Mills Brothers, Connie Boswell, Bing Crosby and the Boswell Sisters. The brothers open a rhythmic treatment with their instrumental imitation and singing words and scat before Connie Boswell renders a thoughtful, slower version with piano accompaniment; the same instrument accompanies Bing before sisters Martha and Vet join Connie for a final up-tempo chorus. Crosby carries the philosophy of the song ("Life ... live and laugh at it all") lightly with a little improvisation. It is a welcome variation from heavy ballads and whoever coined the aphorism invented a good song title.

This is the first time that Bing Crosby and the Mills Brothers featured in the same recording but on this occasion they did not sing together. The recording was issued, with Part 1 (q.v.), on a 12" 78 rpm disc.

The "Cherries" song, sung by Ethel Merman, was the hit of the show and became very popular. Among many other recordings were those by Rudy Vallee, Ethel Merman, Billy Eckstine, Layton and Johnstone and the Mills Brothers. The "Scandals" score was among the last to come from Brown and Henderson. Their erstwhile partner, Buddy de Sylva, had already departed to Hollywood.

Show: "George White's Scandals" (11th Edition) (1931) (Ethel Merman)
Film: "George White's Scandals" (RKO: 1945) (Joan Davis, Jack Haley)
Film: "The Best Things In Life Are Free" (20th C-Fox:1956) (Gordon Macrae, Ernest Borgnine, Dan Dailey) (The story of De Sylva, Brown and Henderson)
Film: "Pennies From Heaven" (MGM: 1982) (Steve Martin)
Film: "The Survivors" (Columbia: 1983) (Walter Matthau)

23rd Nov 1931(New York)

Bru E 37373-A-B

(166) WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT MEETS THE GOLD OF THE DAY
Studio Orchestra — (Roy Turk - Bing Crosby; Fred Ahlert)

A mournful trumpet leads the orchestral introduction to a verse and chorus by Bing; in a second chorus he whistles the first half before reprising the remaining lyrics. In excellent voice and brilliantly supported throughout by Eddie Lang (gtr), other than when an unobtrusive orchestra accompanies the whistling, Bing evokes a strange, evanescent melancholy into this longing for "peace of mind". His pauses are musically dramatic and the delivery of vowel tones includes sounds of great beauty. There is an interesting example of phrasing variation in the takes: in the verse on take A he sings "to the long (pause) ago" and in take B the pause is omitted. The phrase is one

that requires no pause and in take B it holds a poignancy lacking in the other. Crosby's whistling differs in the takes but is equally acceptable in either, the charming arpeggios of take A being replaced in take B by trills and ornamentation.

It was fashionable in the 1930's for radio artists to have a "signature" tune which was used to introduce and "sign off" their programme. In his autobiographical album (1954) Bing said, "Anybody breaking into radio in 1931 had to have a theme song, a sort of musical identification, and Turk and Ahlert wrote me a good one." They did indeed and it became the most famous of them all. Oddly enough, its original title was "When The Gold Of The Day Meets The Blue Of The Night" but when transposed it was preferred to another song that was also considered, "Love Came Into My Heart". After he had been using the song for this purpose for a few months it was thought, incredible as it may now seem, that radio listeners might tire of it and the song "Just An Echo In The Valley" (recorded on 4th November, 1932) was regarded as a possible replacement. It was never needed and the waltz, fondly referred to as "Old Blue" by Bing, served him for nearly half a century. Although it became so familiar it was never hackneyed and Crosby, who must have sung it, or parts of it, hundreds of times, often fondly debunked it in radio comedy routines; frequently he would carelessly sing "When The Blue Of The Night" when introducing his radio shows.

Ahlert's fine melody is similar to that used by Sir Arthur Sullivan for his "Tit Willow" song in "The Mikado" and may have been derived from it. Turk's well-drawn lyrics, with a little assistance from Crosby, are entirely suited.

Although this was Bing's first recording of the song (he also recorded it on 20th July 1940, 17th July 1945, 4th February 1949 (from radio) and 21st April 1954) he had previously sung it in radio broadcasts. He also featured it in the last of the films that he made for Mack Sennett when, in an amusing scene he had to prove his identity - the future signature tune was an appropriate choice - in a wager with Franklin Pangborn and wins that indignant gentleman's car. He also sang snatches of the song in "The Big Broadcast" and on one of the occasions transposed the lines to effect the anatomically interesting "And the blue of her eyes crowns the gold of her hair". In the documentary film, "Brother Can You Spare A Dime", he is heard, off screen, singing the song on the soundtrack.

Crosby's closest contemporary rival, Russ Columbo, also successfully recorded the song. It was recorded prolifically and became very popular; in 1978 Bing's great friend, Rosemary Clooney, included it in her Memorial Tribute album.

In addition to the differences mentioned above the takes may also be easily distinguished by the following line:

Take A: "and return to the long ago"
Take B: "and go back to the long ago"

Film: "Blue Of The Night" (Mack Sennett:1931) (Bing Crosby)
Film: "The Big Broadcast" (Paramount: 1932) (Bing Crosby, Stuart Erwin, Leila Hyams)
Film: "Brother Can You Spare A Dime" (1975)

3rd Dec 1931(New York)

(167) I'M SORRY DEAR (Harry Tobias - Johnny Scott; Anson Weeks) Bru E 37440-A-B
Studio Orchestra

Bing in contrite mood again; he has previously surrendered, apologised, sought forgiveness and begged for another chance. Little wonder then that the sense of *deja vu* asserts itself as he now covers the whole gamut of penitent emotion and even less wonder that his female admirers loved him for it.

The now familiar pattern of verse, chorus and a final chorus shared by orchestra and singer is followed and Bing gives an immaculate performance with resonant tones and expert phrasing which is considerably aided by a lyric comprised almost entirely of short phrases. Singing with great sensitivity he improvises a dramatic rising scale (take A) on the line "bring you glad days" and concludes the title line on a high note. A competent accompaniment includes an occasionally heard Tommy Dorsey (tbn) and Joe Moresco (pno) but the second eight bars of the orchestral section takes the honours with the melody played on violin supported by Eddie Lang (gtr).

The song itself is pedestrian; the tune is not one that errand boys of the day would whistle on their rounds (often a good yardstick with which to measure the merit of a melody) and the lyrics, while neatly fitting the tune, are trite. Invention must have failed the experienced Harry Tobias when he used "made it" to rhyme with "faded".

The takes are easily identified:

Take A: "All those sad days"; song (reprise) ends on high note
Take B: "All your sad days"; song (reprise) ends on low note

16th Dec 1931(New York)

(168) DINAH (Sam M Lewis-Joe Young; Harry Akst) Bru E 37467-A-B
Mills Brothers (John, Herbert, Harry, Donald)
Orchestra (directed by Bennie Krueger)

Any reviewer would reach for superlatives to describe this recording: it is a gem polished to perfection by artists of supreme talent. The principals have been lavishly, and justifiably, praised for their efforts but the contribution of the orchestra has been somewhat overlooked. After playing an eight bars introduction the orchestra accompanies Bing for a superb first chorus, the instrumentalists (including Frank Guarente (tpt), Will Bradley (tbn), Max Farley (ten), Joe Moresco (pno) and Larry Gomar (dms)) excelling in a fine jazz arrangement. Crosby's own jazz phrasing is beyond criticism and inspires the Brothers in a faster repeat chorus wherein, without benefit or need of the orchestra, their rhythmic harmony floats over John's deep bass notes to the accompaniment of a guitar. Bing joins them in the romp that follows - scat, riffs, spoken interpolations, repeat vocal passages, spontaneous improvisations - the group, with rhythmically tight accompaniment, supporting Bing and *vice versa* as they exchange roles. The final brief scat break is by the Mills Brothers when we listen to take A but on take B Bing cannot refrain from joining them in a fine photo-finish. Either way the listener is left in no doubt whatsoever that "the name of this song is "Dinah"" and nor, of its kind, is there anything finer.

There are a number of easily discernible differences between the takes. The following, from Bing's chorus, will suffice to identify:

Take A: "Show her to me"; "'cos my Dinah might"
Take B: "I would like to have you show her to me"; " Because my Dinah might"

Although Crosby and the Mills Brothers had been separately featured on the "George White's Scandals" recording of 25th October, "Dinah" was the first on which they sang together. Considering its great success - it became a million seller - and that of the two subsequent recordings they made ("Shine" (29th February, 1932) and "My Honey's Lovin' Arms" (26th January, 1933)) it is a matter for regret that their collaborative output was so limited. In 1935 the eldest brother, John, died and the boys' father, John Snr, took his place singing bass until he retired in 1956 after which the trio continued, with a guitar accompanist, into the 1970's. The career of the group was thus exactly contemporaneous with that of Bing Crosby. The quartet started in small-time vaudeville singing and playing kazoos until, the story goes, the night that Harry forgot his small instrument and improvised the sound vocally through cupped hands. The resultant tone, sounding like a trumpet, proved popular and afterwards, abandoning

their kazoos they vocally simulated other instruments such as trombone, tuba and reeds. Labels of their early recordings proclaimed "No musical instruments or mechanical devices used other than one guitar". The act, "Four Boys And A Guitar" , and their theme song, "Goodbye Blues", became highly successful.

Another Crosby recording of the song, taken from a radio show was mastered on 26th June, 1953 and he recorded it in June, 1976. Almost everybody else in the business, from "Fats" Waller to G H Elliott, recorded the song. Danny Kaye recorded it for his daughter, Dena, pronouncing it accordingly. Coleman Hawkins composed and recorded a version of his own based upon the chords of "Dinah" and called it "Hanid".

Among the most popular of songs, "Dinah" was copyrighted in 1925 and first introduced by Ethel Waters at the Plantation Club on Broadway. The show "Kid Boots" had opened in 1923 but the star, Eddie Cantor, and producer, Flo Ziegfeld, thought that it lacked a really good song. Composer Harry Akst played "Dinah" to Cantor and it was interpolated into the show; featured by Cantor it became a tremendous hit. When singer Frances Rose Shore was attending Vanderbilt University she featured the song on the local radio station in Nashville, using it for her signature tune. Later she adopted the name of the song legally and professionally.

Crosby sang it, accompanied by Eddie Lang (gtr), in "The Big Broadcast". In "Rose Marie" it was attempted by Jeanette MacDonald in a comedy scene when, as an opera singer, she fails to cope with its rhythm.

Show: "Kid Boots" (1923) (Eddie Cantor, Mary Eaton)
Film: "The Big Broadcast" (Paramount: 1932) (Bing Crosby, Stuart Erwin, Leila Hyams)
Film: "Rose Marie" (MGM: 1936) (Jeanette MacDonald, Nelson Eddy, James Stewart)
Film: "Broadway" (Universal:1942 (George Raft, Pat O'Brien)
Film: "Show Business" (RKO: 1944) (Eddie Cantor, George Murphy, Joan Davis, Constance Moore)

21st Dec 1931(New York)

This session , held at the Paramount Theatre where Crosby was then appearing, was the first on which he was accompanied by an organ. The instrument used was not the Theatre's large Wurlitzer but a smaller one that had been designed for the purpose of broadcasts and recordings by organist Jesse Crawford (Helen's husband) from an upstairs studio. It had been presented to the Theatre by the Wurlitzer Company as a gesture of appreciation for publicity gained from Jesse Crawford's work. The session was actually recorded in Brunswick's New York Recording Laboratory

by remote line from the Paramount Theatre.

The organ is not an ideal instrument for accompanying popular song vocals but, as a variant at a time when Crosby was beginning to break new ground and develop new ideas, it was not unwelcome.

(169) CAN'T WE TALK IT OVER? (Ned Washington; Victor Young) Bru E 37474-A
Helen Crawford (organ)

The organist plays an eight bars introduction, accompanies Bing throughout a verse and chorus, solos a straight melody chorus and shares a final chorus with the singer. Organ lovers are, therefore, well considered in this arrangement. The first half of the last chorus is a mixture of the Crosby "di-di-dah", whistling and organ with Bing reprising the lyrics of the last sixteen bars. The song is yet another plea, a theme that by now Crosby must dream about, but nonetheless he effects a sincere freshness to the words with hardly a phrasing blemish - just, perhaps, two minor ones in the verse that almost escape detection for who can care when the voice is so spellbinding?

The song, as befitting its context, is a little mournful but it became very popular in 1931-32 and, with LP sales in later years, Crosby's recording reached the million mark.

Film: "Illegal" (Warner Bros: 1935) (Edward G Robinson)

(170) I FOUND YOU (Jimmy Campbell - Reg Connelly; Ray Noble) Bru E 37525-A-B
Helen Crawford (organ)

One of the nicer general features about recordings of the time was the inclusion of a verse that usually set the pattern and mood. This time, however, it is dispensed with and after a four bars organ introduction Bing sings the chorus. The organ leads into a second chorus, the first half of which it shares with the singer "la-di-deeing" and singing the title line; Crosby then reprises the remaining lyrics.

After all his previous supplications Bing has now succeeded in finding his true love but there is no *joie de vivre* in the discovery. This is no "eureka"-like exclamation and sounds more like a lament; if the word "lost" is substituted for "found" the tune is no less apposite. The organ imposes too dirge-like a quality for the sentiments that the song is intended to convey and as Crosby lugubriously sings "I'm so happy now" one is not entirely convinced that his joy is unalloyed. Nevertheless, if these discrepancies are ignored his performance, a pensive interpretation, is most beguiling. Apart from an odd pause between "How can I" and "express dear" (and

in the "take" difference mentioned below) the phrases are delivered movingly in a rich tone. The line "Gladly I confess ... from the start" is a perfect example of how to give correct stress to every syllable for maximum emotive effect.

This fine melody, from the team that wrote "Goodnight Sweetheart" (q.v.), has lyrics that metrically fit its phrases to perfection. If the song did not quite reach the heights of popularity enjoyed by its forerunner it was still well liked.

Original issues of Crosby's recording were limited to the USA and Japan as the take A master was damaged and the B master not issued. The takes can be identified by the last line of the first chorus when, on take A, Bing pauses between "I" and "found" and, on take B there is no such pause. (This last line is, with the reprise, sung twice on each take and only once is it sung without the pause). A pause between "loved you" and "from the start" occurs only on take A.

1932

This was a momentous year for Bing Crosby, one that saw the beginning of his rise to international fame. After completing his contracts at the Paramount Theatre and with Cremo Cigars he went on a tour of theatres, with Eddie Lang (gtr) and Lennie Hayton (pno) as accompanists, in Chicago (where he made several recordings), Buffalo, New Haven, Boston and St. Louis. Everywhere his New York success was repeated. Impressed by his rising popularity Paramount Pictures signed him and other radio artists to appear in the film "The Big Broadcast" and before it was finished he signed a long term contract for five feature films over the next three years. His growing reputation was thus further enhanced by his starring in films where his relaxed, natural charm could be seen as well as heard. After filming "The Big Broadcast" Crosby returned to New York for an engagement at the Capitol Theatre, opening on 2nd December.

Of the period late 1931 and early 1932 Crosby related in his autobiography, "Call Me Lucky", that he suffered throat trouble through overuse of his voice in the enormous amount of work he was doing in theatre, radio, recordings, clubs and benefits. In order, he said, to avoid a delicate operation for removal of the "nodes" he had developed on his vocal cords he gave his voice complete rest for two weeks after which it came back unimpaired but slightly lower in pitch. There is, however, little aural evidence of this on contemporary recordings.

By now his recordings were much sought after and achieved high sales; together with his radio shows they had helped him attain national recognition but with the records being issued in other countries and his appearance in films he was becoming an international favourite. His apprenticeship was at last bearing rich fruits and disclosing talents that were to produce innumerable imitators. His voice revealed a depth of feeling hitherto unreached by popular singers and induced a harmless monomania among his admirers that persists to this day. The 1931 - 1934 period was his first "golden" period when he made over a hundred recordings which, almost without exception, are classics of popular singing. His work at this time, however musically intelligent, was nevertheless not always literary sensitive and if he ever had regard to semantic lapses seemed content to let "tones and sonorities" convey mood, passion and feeling. The raw edge of a lusty bravura gave an emotionalism of added intensity as the voice developed into a magnificent instrument. With increasing confidence he experimented in seeking new means of expression by introducing jazz phrasing, whistling, scat, wordless vocal phrases and other mannerisms into the field of popular singing; not all were successful and were abandoned within a few years.

From now on Bing Crosby would need few, if any, signposts to point the direction of his career.

21st Jan 1932(New York)

(171) SNUGGLED ON YOUR SHOULDER (Joe Young; Carmen Lombardo) Bru B 11163-A
Studio Orchestra (directed by Bennie Kreuger)

A trumpet leads the orchestral introduction and Bing sings a tender, restrained verse and chorus with soft and sympathetic accompaniment. Completely relaxed and maintaining the warm, intimate, *tete-a-tete* atmosphere of lovers lost to the world he is overwhelmed by his own emotions ("I'm in ecstasy"). Even the "la-di-de" first half of the reprised chorus is taken gently and the mood remains until, resuming the words on the last four lines, he is unable to resist a slight melodic variation and becomes a little more emphatic.

Young's lyrics cosily fit Lombardo's seductive tune and the song had much initial popularity. It was recorded by the composer's brother, Guy Lombardo with his Royal Canadians, Morton Downey, Eddy Duchin, Kate Smith and Kay Starr among others and in the UK was recorded by Carroll Gibbons and the Savoy Hotel Orpheans (with an Al Bowlly vocal).

Bing Crosby had featured the song in a 1931 Mack Sennett two-reel film when a scene called for him to pilot an airplane with open cockpits and sing it to Florine McKinney. On that occasion the lyrics were slightly parodied by referring to flying instead of dancing.

Film: "Sing, Bing, Sing" (Mack Sennett:1931)(Bing Crosby)

11th Feb 1932(New York)

(172) ST LOUIS BLUES (W C Handy) Bru BX 11263-A-B
Duke Ellington & his Orchestra

Orchestra personnel:- Arthur Whetsel, Freddy Jenkins, Cootie Williams (tpts); Joe Nanton, Lawrence Brown (tbns); Otto Hardwick, Harry Carney, Barney Bigard (reeds); Duke Ellington (pno); Fred Guy (bjo); Wellman Braud (sbs); Sonny Greer (dms)

The orchestra opens with a rendering of the first section of the composition, first with trumpet lead (Williams) which is then succeeded by trombone (Brown). Ellington's piano chords lead to and, with Fred Guy (gtr) and the orchestra, support the vocal throughout; on the first and third sections Bigard (clt), and Carney (sax) colour the accompaniment with Nanton (tbn) growling in the middle section. The orchestra resumes at faster tempo with a solo from Hardwick (alt sax), well supported by the brass section, and then accompanies a fine Crosby scatting session and two final lines lament before coming to a somewhat abrupt conclusion.

Following a string of Crosby ballads, with few exceptions since he became a solo artist, this is an early demonstration of his remarkable versatility and he fits the Ellington scene as comfortably as if he had been part of it for as long as his Whiteman duration. His phrasing is admirably fashioned to the unique sound of the orchestra where it could have so easily floundered among the "growls" and the muted instrumental variations. His scat vocal, too, is in place and well taken. It is the more remarkable if, as reported by Dr J T H Mize, the recording was not pre-arranged and that being coincidentally in the studio Ellington invited Crosby to join the orchestra in an impromptu rendition.

Not unexpectedly, given the "head" arrangements of the instrumentalists, there are orchestral differences in the takes. Take B, but not take A, commences with Carney slap-tonguing four bars (bar sax) before Williams enters to solo more smoothly than his growling effect on take A. There are also many variations in the vocal. Two that may be very easily discerned are:

Take A: "pulls that gal around"
Take B: "pulls that man around"

On take A the last line is "gone so far away from me" but this and the preceding line are omitted from take B as Bing finishes with "like a rock cast down deep in the sea" (although previously in the final section of the song he has interpolated two extra lines).

The composer of the song, William Christopher Handy, became known as "Father of the blues" which was the title of his autobiography. It was not, of course, a strictly accurate designation as he did not invent the blues but he did document for posterity many traditional blues tunes that he heard and remembered in towns situated along the Mississippi River. Written in 1914, "St Louis Blues" is Handy's most famous tune and possibly the one that includes most of his own original ideas. It differs from the normal 12 bar blues form by having three separate sections one of which is in an early tango form before that rhythm was modified and refined in the Argentine. The song is one of the most recorded pieces of all time, by way of, inter alia, the W C Handy Orchestra, Cab Calloway, Ted Lewis, Nat "King" Cole, Liberace, Quintet of the Hot Club of France, Louis Armstrong, Paul Whiteman, Bessie Smith, Mills Brothers and Fats Waller to the famous Glenn Miller rendition, "St Louis Blues March" that displeased the war-time military authorities but pleased everybody else.

In the film "Birth Of The Blues" Crosby sings a few lines of the song which is then taken by Ruby Elzy and the Hall-Johnson Choir. In "St Louis Blues" (1958) it is sung by Nat "King" Cole (as W C Handy) and also by Eartha Kitt and Pearl Bailey. Judy Garland recorded it for the soundtrack of her film "Presenting Lily Mars" (MGM:1943) but it was omitted from the released print.

Film: "Is Everybody Happy" (1929) (Ted Lewis)

Film: "St Louis Blues" (Paramount: 1939) (Dorothy Lamour)
Film: "Birth Of The Blues" (Paramount: 1941) (Bing Crosby, Mary Martin, Brian Donlevy)
Film: "Is Everybody Happy" (1943) (Ted Lewis, Larry Parks) (This film was based upon the life of Ted Lewis)
Film: "St. Louis Blues" (Paramount: 1958) (Nat "King" Cole, Eartha Kitt, Ruby Dee) (This film was based upon the life of W C Handy)

16th Feb 1932(New York)

(173) STARLIGHT (Joe Young; Bernice Petkere) — Bru B 11291-A-C
Studio Orchestra

The verse from Bing has bells from "the little steeple on the hill" ringing the angelus and in the chorus he seeks celestial aid "to find the one I love" when more practical assistance is being contributed by some fetching chords from Eddie Lang (gtr). The orchestra then plays eight bars before Herman "Hymie" Woolfson (ten) takes up the tune and Bing whistles harmonic support with the melody line of "Mean To Me". He reprises the last half of the chorus and the orchestra concludes with more angelus bells.

It is an ordinary song, not much recorded - one who did record it was Glen Gray and the Casa Loma Orchestra - never achieving any great popularity but Crosby's vocal serves it very well as he delivers unexceptional lyrics expressively (the phrase "come closer" is tender and convincing) although there is an inexplicable pause in the last line. There is, too, an unnecessary break between the third and fourth words in the line "know the one I'm thinking of" that appears in take C. In take A the line is sung without any pause and sounds better. Another means of defining the takes is that in the reprise section of take C, Bing sings "in my lonely prayer". In take A he has it "in a lonely prayer".

The composer's output was scant but included some worthwhile songs such as "Lullaby Of The Leaves" and "Close Your Eyes". The melody of "Starlight" was taken from the middle part of "Violets", a composition from 1900 by Ellen Wright. Another amateur composer had used the same material and brought a law suit against Bernice Petkere for plagiarism. Bernice lost the suit but never admitted the original source.

(174) HOW LONG WILL IT LAST? (Max Lief; Joseph Meyer) — Bru B 11292-A
Studio Orchestra

The orchestral introduction has a mournful, almost eastern, flavour

until Eddie Lang (gtr) leads to a verse and chorus by Crosby. Tommy Dorsey (tbn) then takes the melody lead, with obbligato by Lang, for sixteen bars the last eight of which are hummed by Bing; for the next four bars Lang continues the obbligato with violin taking the melody and Crosby reprises the last twelve bars. It is an attractive and rather unusual arrangement for the violin and vocalist to share the bridge melody. Admirers of Lang will be well pleased as he is prominent throughout with delightful chord structures to support the singer and instrumental soloists. Crosby maintains the high standard that by now is becoming expected of him; his tone, articulation and feeling transcend the minor "pause" errors and the dynamic delivery of "Though love go past" contrasts most effectively with the delicacy of such lines as "You are like a burning flame to me". The performance exemplifies the virile confidence and authority that has now become part of the Crosby style.

The tune is attractive but the lyrics lack inspiration. The song was first introduced by Joan Crawford in the 1931 film.

Film: "Possessed" (MGM: 1931) (Joan Crawford, Clark Gable)

23rd Feb 1932(New York)

(175) LOVE, YOU FUNNY THING (Roy Turk; Fred E Ahlert) Bru B 11330-A
Studio Orchestra

An introduction by the strings-led orchestra is followed by a verse sung by Bing with only piano accompaniment. The orchestra returns for the chorus accompaniment and a snatch of Jimmy Dorsey (clt) heralds eight bars of a chorus by the orchestra before Bing reprises the rest of it. Larry Gomar (dms) maintains a steady beat throughout but the arrangement has otherwise little to offer. Crosby sings very easily, has no phrasing problems and the elementary lyrics present no difficulty other than that of credibility, especially the doggerel verse.

Notwithstanding its limitations the song did become very popular for a time but was soon dropped. Contemporary artists who recorded it included Louis Armstrong, Kate Smith, George Olsen and his Orchestra, Ruth Etting and Guy Lombardo and his Royal Canadians.

(176) MY WOMAN (Bing Crosby, Max Wartell, Irving Wallman) Bru B 11331-A
Studio Orchestra

There is an Ellingtonian sound to the introduction before Bing sings a chorus; Tommy Dorsey (tbn) solos sixteen bars and Bing then repeats the

second half of the song. Dorsey's mellifluous tone nicely complements Crosby's baritone between the vocal sections in this blues-tinged number. There is no verse and, indeed, one is unnecessary for the chorus makes it all too clear how the poor chap has been made to suffer. We learn that his woman is mean, makes a fool of him, treats him badly, lies, makes him cry, has a heart of stone and isn't human; he doesn't know why but he'll love her till the day he dies. It would probably tax the expertise of a psychiatrist to enlighten him.

The melancholy words (Crosby had a hand in them and a valiant effort is made to rhyme "woman" and "human") are well matched with a glum tune although the bridge section is stirring. Nothing, however, can be taken from Crosby's powerful performance and dynamic control. His rendition of the middle passage is compelling and only a breathing pause after "I'll be loving" for the big finish on "my woman" is distracting.

Ted Lewis also made a successful recording of the song and included it in his stage act.

29th Feb 1932(New York)

(177) SHINE (Lew Brown - Cecil Mack; Ford Dabney) Bru B 11376-A
Mills Brothers (John, Herbert, Harry, Donald)
Orchestral Accompaniment

Orchestra personnel (including):- Will Bradley (tbn); Les Dreyer, Bennie Kreuger, Max Farley (reeds); Joe Moresco (pno); Eddie Lang (gtr); Hank Stern(bass); Larry Gomar (dms)

The orchestra, with Will Bradley's muted trombone and a scat appetiser from one of the Mills, leads to the Brothers' vocal. With John's simulated tuba the other three plaintively harmonise about taking with a smile all the troubles that arise from their colour. Their brief instrumental imitations are then superseded by the real thing with fine rhythmic accompaniment as Bing takes over the vocal. After an exchange of lines he is succeeded by a solo from one of the quartet before he returns for a fast tempo scat break, in which he is well supported by the Mills boys, and a resumption of the lyrics for a couple of lines.

This recording is an excellent successor to "Dinah", recorded on 16th December, 1931 (q.v.), although its sentiments are rather different. It is very well arranged with changes of mood and tempo and although the lyrics would be unacceptable in today's society they truly explain in a few pithy phrases the situation as it was at the time ("that's the difference maybe"). The harmonies of the Mills Brothers are smoothly delivered in their most relaxed style and the solo voice has just the right quality of hurt and pride ("like to dress up, Bing, in the latest style"). Crosby's "old

chocolate drop" is an affectionate interpolation and his final line ("you'll make the whole world shine"), emphasised by a slower tempo, is entirely sympathetic. The voices of the group and Crosby correlate as a perfect combination and Bing's scat break, backed by rhythmic patterns from the quartet, is one of his best.

The song, written in 1924, had lyrics by Lew Brown (before his collaboration with De Sylva and Henderson) and Cecil Mack. Perhaps, as the rest of it is so good, their use of the whimsical "bluesies" and "shoesies" should be forgiven. Mack, an early turn-of-the-century writer, although his output was scant wrote some Broadway shows and he formed a music publishing company to promote early negro composers. His real name, Richard C MacPherson, was sometimes shown.

The song became very popular and has been recorded by many artists: they include Louis Armstrong, Earl Hines, Benny Goodman, Willie "The Lion" Smith, Jack Teagarden, Quintet of the Hot Club of France, Chick Webb, Ella Fitzgerald and Frankie Laine. In the film "Birth Of The Blues" it is played by Jack Teagarden and his Orchestra. In "The Benny Goodman Story" it is featured by Benny Goodman and his Orchestra with Harry James (tpt).

Film: "A Rhapsody In Black And Blue"
Film: "Birth Of The Blues" (Paramount: 1941) (Bing Crosby, Mary Martin, Brian Donlevy)
Film: "Casablanca" (Warner Bros: 1942) (Humphrey Bogart, Ingrid Bergman)
Film: "Cabin In The Sky" (MGMG: 1943) (Eddie "Rochester" Anderson, Lena Horne, Louis Armstrong)
Film: "The Benny Goodman Story" (Universal: 1955) (Steve Allen, Donna Reed) (Based on the life of Benny Goodman)

8th Mar 1932(New York)

(178) FACE THE MUSIC Medley (Pt 1) (Irving Berlin) Bru BX 11416-(A)-B-C
(a) Soft Lights And Sweet Music
(b) On A Roof In Manhattan
Victor Young & His Orchestra

A lengthy orchestral introduction precedes Bing's chorus of "Soft Lights And Sweet Music", the orchestra plays "On A Roof In Manhattan" with vibraphone featured, Bing reprises his chorus and the orchestra repeats the same tune. It is an excellent arrangement by Victor Young, well varied in tempo and instrumentally, the orchestral interlude between the vocals having in part an almost Neapolitan flavour. Crosby's vocal, however, is

sadly lacking: the voice is there, of course, but he sounds uneasy and the phrasing is thoughtless and erratic with pauses occurring every two or three words. "And you", "will bring you" and "and pale" are sung, in one or other of the takes, as separate phrases and they and other instances are distracting. Bing does not contribute to Part 2 of the medley.

The original issue of this recording on a 12" 78 rpm record (take B) is very rare, only about fifty copies being released before, it was said, being withdrawn on the same day of issue. There is something of a mystery about the reason for its withdrawal. It was rumoured that the master and the remaining stock were all destroyed at the insistence of Crosby who was dissatisfied with it but when questioned many years later, in 1961, he denied this and, during the same year, Columbia (US) confirmed that the B master still existed. Although, therefore, the rumour was proved false one could, had it been true, have sympathised with the desire to have the recording taken from the market. Subsequently reissues of the recording appeared on microgroove including, strangely enough, those of another master (C). Yet another issue claimed to be a third take (A) but there is no discernible difference between that and B and they must be regarded as one and the same.

The show for which the song was written was successful for Irving Berlin following a period during which his work had seemed to lack some of his earlier inspiration. This song, particularly, and "Let's Have Another Cup Of Coffee" were the hits of the show. They were recorded extensively by dance bands everywhere and "Soft Lights" was also recorded by Eddy Duchin, Bobby Hackett, Fred Waring and Tony Martin, amongst others.

There are several differences in the takes and the following examples provide identification:

Take B: "and you (pause) in my arms"
Take C: "and you in (pause) my arms"
Take B: "reveal (pause) all your charms"
Take C: "reveal all (pause) your charms"

Show: "Face The Music" (Musical Revue) (1932) (Mary Boland, J Harold Murray)

(179) SHADOWS ON THE WINDOW (Ned Washington; Victor Young) Bru B 11417-A-B
Victor Young & his Orchestra

After a four bars trumpet introduction Bing sings a verse and chorus; then follows sixteen bars solo from Frank Guarante (tpt) with Larry Gomar (dms) and Crosby whistling every other line before he reprises the last half of the chorus.

Here is another in the line of doleful ditties but it is not unattractive.

There are few unnatural pauses (the worst, perhaps, being after "It seems that we") and the bridge is sung with power and feeling. The whistling is out of place, sounding too carefree after the torment of betrayal, and, as the antithesis of dejection, would have been better omitted. Ned Washington's lyrics demonstrate the perils of shadowgraphy (how could they have been so stupid and indiscreet?) but almost as distressing is the dreadful "pane/pain" pun.

The two takes are very similar but can be identified by the whistling; on take A he whistles to the line, "they tell me it's true, dear" but on take B the whistling stops on "there's nothing else to do". On take A the words "me blue" are sung on the same note but on take B they are sung on two notes rising.

15th Mar 1932(New York)

(180) PARADISE (Gordon Clifford; Nacio Herb Brown) Bru B 11480-A-B
Studio Orchestra (directed by Victor Young)

There is no verse in this recording; Bing sings a chorus, the orchestra takes a chorus and the singer returns for a final half chorus. It is not an ideal song for Crosby, relying almost entirely upon innuendo for its effect and there is little subtlety in his treatment. The orchestra's contribution is unexceptionable both in accompanying the first chorus and its own interlude with trombone and guitar prominent, when Bing whistles a couple of lines, but Eddie Lang's accompaniment (gtr) to the vocal reprise is pleasing.

The song, written in 1931, enjoyed a tremendous vogue at the time, a popularity occasioned solely by the suggestive "la-de-da-dahs" of the lyrics for the melody itself is no more than an average waltz of its day. It quickly found its way into the repertoire of most night-club singers and some interpretations were so sensuous that the song was banned from US radio. The written words, however, are innocuous, especially by modern standards, and rely heavily upon the singer for their effect. The lyric is cleverly fitted to the tune although it is surprising that Gordon Clifford should have tried to rhyme "kiss" and "resist" when a proper and more apposite rhyme so readily suggests itself. The song is not often heard today and when it is its use is usually for atmosphere or period evocation. Nacio Herb Brown, after abandoning tailoring and real estate, became a very successful composer for films writing many hit songs with Arthur Freed.

Surprisingly, Crosby chose to record the song again for his autobiography album on 21st April, 1954 but made no comment about it in the narration. Many recordings were made by dance bands and others including Russ Columbo, Morton Downey, Nat "King" Cole, Frank Sinatra, Dorothy Lamour and Gene Krupa.

The song was introduced in the 1932 film when it was sung and whistled by Pola Negri. In the later film a few lines of it were hummed by Irene Dunne whilst taking a shower.

The takes are difficult to determine and only careful examination reveals the difference in the second line:

Take A: "La da de de de, da da da dum"
Take B: "La da da de, da da da dum"

Film: "A Woman Commands" (1932) (Pola Negri)
Film: "My Favorite Wife" (RKO:1940)(Cary Grant,Irene Dunne)

(181) YOU'RE STILL IN MY HEART (Jack Yellen; Dan Dougherty) Bru B 11481-A
Studio Orchestra (directed by Victor Young)

Frank Guarante (tpt) leads the introduction and the orchestra then accompanies Crosby through a verse and chorus. A rhythmic half chorus from the orchestra with a straight melody solo from Guarante (tpt) leads to a "la-de-da" middle passage from Bing, supported by Eddie Lang (gtr) and Joe Venuti (vln), before he resumes the lyrics for the final stanza. Lang is well featured and the vocal, with Bing in forgiving mood and the familiarly attractive "sob" in the voice, is full of tender feeling. A pause that isolates the words "in the dawn" can be the only criticism of an otherwise faultlessly phrased performance that raises the song to a level above its true worth. The melody is no more than average and the lyrics, while adequately expressing the sentiments, are workmanlike rather than inspired.

13th April 1932(New York)

(182) LAWD, YOU MADE THE NIGHT TOO LONG (Sam M Lewis; Victor Young)
Don Redman & his Orchestra Bru BX 11701-A-B
Boswell Sisters (Connie, Martha, Helvetia ("Vet"))

Orchestra personnel :-Langston Curl, Shirley Clay, Sidney de Paris (tpts); Claude Jones, Fred Robinson, Benny Morton (tbns); Edward Inge, Rupert Cole, Don Redman, Robert Carroll (reeds); Horace Henderson (pno); Talcott Reeves (bjo); Bob Ysaguirre (bs); Manzie Johnson (dms)

Horace Henderson's concert arrangement opens with resounding brass chords and the Boswells singing the mournful title phrase. A verse by the orchestra with trumpet lead and punchy brass precedes a vocal chorus by Bing and clarinet patterns punctuated by brass chords. A short orchestral

interlude changes the heavy mood with a Vivaldi-like vernal sound and leads to a verse by Connie Boswell concluding with a trilling clarinet before she continues with a chorus in which her sisters give support in a return to the original gloom.

Victor Young's spiritual-like composition is interestingly arranged by Henderson. Crosby's chorus, sung straight, ends with an impassioned belief and contrasts with that of the Boswell Sisters who improvise words and melody but the air of melancholy remains. (Someone, perhaps Groucho Marx, later decided to relieve the atmosphere with a parody version, "Sam, You Made The Pants Too Long"). On take A Bing sings "this night's too long"; on take B he sings, "the night's too long".

This was the second recording on which both Crosby and the Boswells were featured (the first, recorded on 25th October, 1931 was the medley from "George White's Scandals") but, again, they did not actually sing together and their respective contributions are separate. The sisters, all born in New Orleans, formed a jazz-influenced trio singing and playing instruments (Connie: cello; Martha: piano; Vet: violin) and, as teenagers, won a radio contest. They eventually became one of the most popular groups ever in theatre, radio and on records. The sisters broke up professionally in 1935 after the marriages of Martha and Vet but Connie, the lead singer, continued on a very successful solo career in spite of a physical handicap through polio in infancy that forced her to perform in a wheelchair. She later changed the spelling of her name to "Connee" and for a time appeared regularly on Crosby's Kraft Music Hall Radio Show.

23rd Apr 1932(Chicago)

(183) SWEET GEORGIA BROWN (Kenneth Casey; Maceo Pinkard) Bru JC 8592-A-B
Isham Jones & his Orchestra

There could hardly be a more exuberant version of this old favourite. From the introductory bars the orchestra sets the pace, first with tenor saxophone stating the melody and then Manny Klein (tpt) entering with a fine improvised solo before the full orchestra concludes the opening chorus. A couple of bars from Eddie Lang (gtr) leads to Bing's vocal. With little departure from the melody line and supported by the orchestra and Red Norvo (xyl) he sings a faultless, tongue-in-cheek chorus with great verve. His interpolation of "not much" after "and you know I don't lie" sums up his approach. When the orchestra plays its second chorus the instrumentalists are in fine form and there are successive improvised solos from saxophone with some nice work from the drums, Lennie Hayton (pno), Manny Klein (tpt) and Tommy Dorsey (tbn) with Eddie Lang (gtr) again leading to

Bing"s re-entry. With more backing from Norvo (xyl) his first half-chorus cannot fail to please lovers of "scat" singing and, resuming the lyrics, his jazz-phrasing is fruit born of rich experience. Sales exceeded a million.

There are several instrumental improvisation differences and some vocal variations in the takes which afford easy recognition. Some of the latter are:

Take A: "Sweet Georgia Brown"; "I don't lie"; "They all sigh and wanna die for"; "Since she came, why it's a shame"
Take B: "Sweet Miss Georgia Brown"; "I do not lie"; "They all sigh and wanna die" (the "for" is almost inaudible); "Since she came, it's a shame"

The song was written in 1925 by Casey and Pinkard but is often wrongly attributed to Ben Bernie who had little or nothing to do with it. The irrepressibly swinging tune with its lyrics as neat as the Georgian gal's two left feet ("Fellers she can't get must be fellers that she ain't met") has had lasting popularity. It has been recorded very many times by jazz groups, swing bands, dance orchestras and solo artists including those by Louis Armstrong, Mills Brothers, Nat "King" Cole Trio, Earl Hines, Muggsy Spanier, Benny Goodman, Nat Gonella and Harry James. Several other jazz compositions have been based upon its chord structures, notably "Swing House" by Gerry Mulligan, recorded by Stan Kenton and "Dill Pickles".

Film: "Broadway" (Universal:1942)(George Raft, Pat O'Brien)
Film: "Follow The Boys" (Universal: 1944) (George Raft)
Film: "When My Baby Smiles At Me" (20th C-Fox: 1948) (Betty Grable, Dan Dailey, Jack Oakie)
Film: "Some Like It Hot" (Un Artists: 1959) (Jack Lemmon)

(184) WALTZING IN A DREAM (Ned Washington - Bing Crosby; Victor Young)
Isham Jones & his Orchestra Bru JC 8593-A

After a few bright piano chords in the introduction the orchestra, sounding appropriately subdued (especially after the first recording of the session), accompanies the singer through a verse and chorus. The first half of the next chorus is taken by the orchestra with trombone and trumpet alternating the melody lead in the first four lines; a violin leads the next eight bars before Crosby whistles and sings the last half of the chorus. Although he tends to sing in phrases too short to make good sense ("at a glance", "always be", "of splendour") he performs the song tenderly and makes it most beguiling. Interestingly the obbligato he whistles is virtually the "Pagan Love Song" tune that was so popular in 1929.

The verse of Victor Young's tune has an appealing melody, perhaps even better than that of the chorus, and the lyrics (to which Crosby made some contribution) are apposite even if the rhymes are a little too obvious. The song was popular with dance bands, always at that time on the lookout for a good, tuneful waltz, but it could have been underrated and didn't last.

(185) HAPPY-GO-LUCKY YOU (Al Hoffman, Al Goodhart, Jack Murray) Bru JC 8594-A
Isham Jones & his Orchestra

For a song that bemoans a lost love the orchestral introduction, with its short trumpet and trombone breaks, sounds cheerful enough and Bing himself doesn't seem too disturbed during his full chorus (he has no verse). The orchestra is then led for eight bars each by the strings with Eddie Stone (vln), Saxie Mansfield (ten), George Thew (muted tpt) and strings again before Bing returns to reprise the last half of the chorus. There is sterling work from Howard Smith (pno) throughout. Crosby sings and phrases excellently and partly improvises the reprised lines to great effect. The last line of the song, with a gentle melody variation the first time and a powerful heart-rending finish in the reprise, is dealt with most effectively. There is another example here of the intrusive "n" before the word "and" in his last line.

The song has no more than an average melody and the lyric is not outstanding although the bridge contains a neat twist with "I do the same to forget". Nevertheless it caught a spirit of the time and became very popular, being recorded by many of the bands, Al Bowlly and Layton and Johnstone. In 1953 Johnny Ray revived it as one of his "crying" songs.

24th April 1932(Chicago)

(186) LAZY DAY (Gus Kahn - Grace LeBoy Khan - Eric Maschwitz; George Posford)
Isham Jones & his Orchestra Bru JC 8596-B

A short introduction, with Jack Jenney (tbn) leading, is followed by a verse and chorus from Bing with Jenney playing a soft obbligato. A well varied second chorus has eight bars of Jenney (tbn) taking the melody line with Eddie Lang (gtr) taking the next eight bars. Crosby returns to whistle the bridge passage and sing the final stanza.

Crosby sings with complete authority, the final line of each stanza carrying especial conviction, in conveying the bucolic atmosphere of a day

in the country. If he croaks slightly on the word "hills" it seems only to emphasise the emotion of the perfect sunset he is witnessing. His whistling is suitable to the occasion and in the descriptive coda his final whistled line that follows Jenney (tbn) evokes "bird songs at eventide" in true Eric Coates vein.

Eric Maschwitz has related that he became a songwriter almost by accident. He learned that a friend was having some difficulty with his son who was a student at the Royal College of Music but preferred to write popular tunes. Maschwitz heard a couple of the compositions and wrote lyrics for one of them, "Lazy Day". It was his first effort at song writing and the song was a runner-up in a competition. The lyrics were later revised, to an unknown extent, by Mr and Mrs Kahn but the style of the words used in the Crosby recording is certainly that of Gus Khan with their deceptively simple phrases and rhyming of consecutive words ("wending - spending"; "bending - spending"; "descending - ending") although "green fields whispering of home" seems a forced rhyme to "roam" and irrelevant in context. The song enjoyed a moderate success and was recorded by dance bands but was perhaps worthy of greater attention.

(187) LET'S TRY AGAIN (Charles Newman; Isham Jones) Bru JC 8597-A
Isham Jones & his Orchestra

In a fine arrangement the orchestra accompanies Bing through a chorus and then takes over for sixteen bars. The sound is well textured in which staccato brass chords and a smooth saxophone section nicely blend, with Howard Smith (pno) linking the changes. Crosby then takes sixteen improvised bars ("la-de-da") before returning to the lyrics for the second half of the song. The orchestra plays a stirring coda. Bing delivers the words powerfully and with much persuasion but lines of greater length are sometimes broken at odd places. What sense can be made of "let's try again and swear we'll never say" then taking a breath to continue "goodbye again"? There is, however, no gainsaying that he sounds good.

The song never achieved great popularity but might have deserved better. Perhaps the Crosby - Jones version gave it some enhancement.

25th May 1932(Chicago)

(188) CABIN IN THE COTTON (Mitchell Parish; Frank Perkins) Bru JC 8635-1
Lennie Hayton & his Orchestra

A slightly lengthier than usual introduction has a brief lead from Nat

Natoli (tpt) and dazzling scales from Jimmy Dorsey (sax). Crosby sings a magnificent chorus with excellently arranged support. A second chorus has Bing singing lines after Eddie Lang (gtr) has played them, in a short, gentle instrument-vocal "chase", which alternates each four bars with Jimmy Dorsey (sax) until Crosby sings the remaining second half of the chorus. The reprised section has Bing varying and improvising the melody and a repeat of the last line gives emphasis to his memory of "piccaninny days".

Although the tune is unexceptional, Crosby's interpretation - considerably aided by the way Parish fitted the lyrics to the melodic phrases - is outstanding and this, together with the high standard of accompaniment, makes it difficult to understand why the recording is not rated more highly than it is among Crosby devotees. Frank Perkins composed only a few songs but they included good ones such as "Sentimental Gentleman From Georgia" and "Stars Fell On Alabama".

Other recordings of the song were made by Cab Calloway, Johnny Hamp and Neal Hefti.

(189) WITH SUMMER COMING ON (Roy Turk; Fred E Ahlert) Bru JC 8636-1
Lennie Hayton & his Orchestra

A verse and chorus is sung by Bing in which he is accompanied mainly by Lennie Hayton (pno); the orchestra plays a half chorus with Nat Natoli (tpt) taking the melody and Eddie Lang (gtr) playing harmony chords before the singer reprises the last sixteen bars.

This recording must rank as one of Crosby's worst. The tune is poor, the lyrics are cliche-ridden and the song could be mistaken for a parody of the worst songs of the period. Totally uninspiring, it is sung with no thought to whatever the words are supposed to mean - although, in truth, they hardly bear thinking about - and the phrases are chopped to small pieces ("but it looks like", "for I"m still", "coming on", "but now", "with summer" etc). On the final title line, with Bing dividing four words into two separate phrases, he tries, perhaps, to redeem the situation with a powerful delivery but on the last short word his voice cracks. Either that or there was a recording fault which might have been an omen. Bing and the orchestra really struggle through this one and there should be no surprise at all that they are "without a sweetheart".

26th May 1932(Chicago)

(190) LOVE ME TONIGHT (Ned Washington - Bing Crosby; Victor Young) Bru JC 8640-1
Lennie Hayton & his Orchestra

Bing takes a verse, chorus and another half-chorus in the manner that his ever growing, admiring public were eagerly anticipating and he fulfilled their hopes with superb tone and delivery of this fairly ordinary Victor Young tune. The niceties that were then unnoticed or disregarded, however, can in retrospect sometimes be mildly irritant. A pause in the first line of the verse makes no sense either in meaning or musically; to sing "Oh let me feel" (pause) "your arms" could be more decisive; the line "then if this great big world must end" is sung twice, first with a pause after "this" and the second time after "great" when no pause at all would improve the line and make better sense. Nevertheless Bing delivers the words very forcibly and with great conviction - the bridge passage and reprise are powerfully rendered - and the beauty of his vocal sound enhances the song above its true value, particularly with his two charming last lines. The orhestral half chorus, in which the singer joins with the title lines, has a pleasing 16 bars solo by Frank Trumbauer (cmel) well supported by Eddie Lang (gtr).

The lyrics, by Ned Washington and Bing Crosby - who should, accordingly, have known exactly what to sing - are not of a high quality and platitudes abound. The risible grounds of the second-stanza plea for a night of love make a bathetic stratagem that deserves to fail. Oddly enough, there were two other songs of the same title so even that had no originality: one was written by Rudolf Friml for "The Vagabond King" (1925) and the other by Rodgers and Hart for the Chevalier-MacDonald 1932 film, "Love Me Tonight".

Recordings of the song by Ambrose, Jack Payne, Anson Weeks, Leslie A Hutchinson ("Hutch") and others failed to make any lasting success of it.

(191) SOME OF THESE DAYS (Shelton Brooks) Bru JC 8641-1
Lennie Hayton & his Orchestra

Crosby enjoyed himself with this recording on which he was accompanied by a small contingent of jazz musicians, mostly friends and colleagues from his Whiteman days. A four bars introduction with Eddie Lang (gtr) to the fore - he is, in fact, prominent almost throughout - and Bing swings a fine chorus very close to the melody, expertly followed by another of entirely bubbling scat. Lang takes over for a half-chorus single-string solo

to be succeeded for the second half by a Nat Natoli (muted tpt) solo that maintains the tempo and buoyancy. Frank Trumbauer (cmel) weaves improvisations for the next chorus until Crosby re-enters for the last half and an exhilarating final eight bars that conclude with "tweet tweet tweet twa twa" substituted for the title phrase. An enlivening performance by all concerned as retribution for the abandonment of "daddy" is cheerfully prophesied. It is a recording that is frequently and properly quoted as an example of Bing's ability to sing jazz.

Written in 1910 the simple, attractive lyrics and tune was the first of Shelton Brooks' two all-time popular songs. (The other, "The Darktown Strutters' Ball", was written seven years later). It became the famous signature tune of Sophie Tucker, self-styled "the last of the red-hot mommas", and was sung by her in her first film, "Honky Tonk", and in "Broadway Melody of 1938". It was also recorded by her and almost everybody else. The wide ranging styles of the recordings included those by Cab Calloway, Jack Hylton, Louis Armstrong, Mills Brothers, Paul Whiteman, ODJB, Fletcher Henderson, Rosemary Clooney, Alec Templeton and Humphrey Lyttleton.

In "Rose Marie" this unlikely song for Jeanette MacDonald is attempted by her in a comedy scene when, as an opera singer, she fails to cope with its tempo and rhythm.

Film: "Honky Tonk" (1929) (Sophie Tucker, Lila Lee)
Film: "Animal Crackers" (Paramount: 1930) (Marx Brothers)
Film: "Rose Marie" (MGM: 1936) (J MacDonald, Nelson Eddy)
Film: "Broadway Melody of 1938" (MGM:1937) (Robert Taylor, Eleanor Powell, Judy Garland, Sophie Tucker)
Film: "Broadway" (Universal:1942)(George Raft, Pat O'Brien)
Film: "Follow The Boys" (Universal: 1944) (George Raft)

16th Sep 1932(San Francisco)

(192) PLEASE (Leo Robin; Ralph Rainger) Bru SF 11-A
Anson Weeks & his Orchestra

Eddie Lang (gtr) is in the front of the orchestra almost entirely and provides valuable backing for Crosby whose first plaintive chorus is perfectly phrased. The orchestra's rather plodding half-chorus that follows is weak but the bridge passage with Crosby whistling an improvisation to Lang's chords is a delightful interlude. The substitution of wordless vocables in the final eight bars, though improvised in the same manner, is less effective. Bing sings a reprise of the last half of the song with a sincerity, aided by a "catch in the voice" title word, that couldn't help but win the girl.

The song was another landmark in Crosby's career. The recording sold more than a million copies and he recorded it again on 27th July 1940, 21st April 1954 (when he recalled Lang's great guitar work) and June, 1976. It was a huge success in his first full length starring film, "The Big Broadcast", and was the first of many successes that Robin and Rainger wrote for him with its skilful internal rhymes and the clever "soul of - role of" rhyme. "Please" was the first song that they wrote together and the first of theirs that Bing recorded although he had previously recorded "Louise" that Robin had written with Richard A Whiting. The lyricist became known as the "Poet of Paramount Studios" and he and Rainger became one of Hollywood's most successful teams throughout the 1930's, writing songs for several of Crosby's early films. The partnership was cut short by Rainger's death in an air crash in 1942. Robin continued writing prolifically with others.

In "The Big Broadcast" Bing was accompanied on the song by Eddie Lang (gtr); in "College Humor" he included it in a classroom medley when, as a Professor, he lectured on "Great Love Scenes From Drama"; in "Duffy's Tavern" he sings, unseen, a few lines on the soundtrack; in "Stowaway" it is sung by a Chinaman imitating Crosby in a talent contest.

Film: "The Big Broadcast" (Paramount: 1932) (Bing Crosby)
Film: "College Humor" (Paramount: 1933) (Bing Crosby)
Film: "Please" (Paramount: 1933)(Bing Crosby, Mary Kornman)
Film: "Stowaway" (20th C-Fox: 1936) (Shirley Temple)
Film: "Duffy's Tavern" (Paramount; 1945) (Ed Gardner)

14th Oct 1932(New York)

(193) HOW DEEP IS THE OCEAN? (Irving Berlin) Bru B 12472-A
Studio Orchestra

A graceful four bars trombone introduction, with Eddie Lang's soft-strumming guitar accompanying, sets exactly the right sentimental mood for this Berlin classic. Lang is always there behind Crosby whose verse and chorus are most delicately expressed with words and phrases held and stressed ideally. The verse leads naturally, both musically (except perhaps for a slight awkwardness on "how much I love you") and lyrically in preparing the way to reckon the impossible dimensions of affection. The poetic yardsticks of the chorus, set in such an appealing tune, are questions that answer themselves and Berlin, as clever a wordsmith here as he was musician, wisely lets them do so. Crosby balances every word carefully, emphasising key words with great skill and artistry ("star", "roses", "cry" etc) and delivering emotional phrases with high intensity. An eight bar

trombone solo follows and Bing reprises the remainder of the chorus with some minor deviations from the melody, particularly the last two lines, to provide a climactic finish to an excellent and sympathetic arrangement. His treatment of ballads of this kind make more improbable the fact that his handling of jazz and up-tempo numbers ("Dinah", "Sweet Georgia Brown" etc) could be equally effective.

The song, with its rhetorical title, was published in 1932 to become one of Berlin's best loved ballads but had been written several years earlier. It was composed in a manner different from that of the usual third stanza bridge passage format but, instead, with change of pattern after eight bars.

Immensely popular, hardly anyone neglected to record such a winner: Al Jolson, Kate Smith, Connie Boswell, Paul Whiteman, Ethel Merman, Benny Goodman, Dick Haymes, Artie Shaw, Perry Como, Ella Fitzgerald, Anne Shelton. Pat Boone and Frank Sinatra, who also sang it in the 1952 film, were among those who visited the studios.

Film: "Alexander's Ragtime Band" (20th C-Fox: 1938) (Alice Faye, Tyrone Power, Ethel Merman, Don Ameche)
Film: "Blue Skies" (Paramount: 1945) (Bing Crosby, Fred Astaire)
Film: "Meet Danny Wilson" (Universal: 1952) (Frank Sinatra, Shelley Winters)

(194) HERE LIES LOVE (Leo Robin; Ralph Rainger) Bru B 12473-A
Studio Orchestra

It seems that the protestations of the previous song have been ineffectual and there has been a jilting. A four bars introduction by Lennie Hayton (pno) and strings playing the first two lines of the verse lead to Bing singing the verse accompanied only by Hayton (pno) and Eddie Lang (gtr) before the orchestra joins the accompaniment for the chorus. The reprised section has Crosby talking and singing alternate lines of the first stanza, each phrase after the orchestra has played it, and then omitting the next sixteen bars to conclude with the last stanza, first "da-de-da" and then singing the final two lines. The orchestra participates with a soft and consoling arrangement - Lang, of course, being as reliable as ever - while Crosby is at his superlative best. The short phrases of the lyrics suit him and his rich, round tones deliver the mournful message with mounting melancholy. The lyrics are admirably expressed from the hopelessness of the verse to the final despair, some of the lines being quite outstanding (the last four lines of the verse, the title lines, the middle passage and the strong, anguished finish with Lang's fine backing).

The song was written for Crosby to sing in the film and the tune bears a slight resemblance to "The Thrill Is Gone". It may also, at first hearing,

be reminiscent of an Irving Berlin style but this is complimentary and no disservice as Robin and Rainger formed a first rate team with no dependence upon others. The tune and lyrics were perfect for the situation for which they were written with sentiments expressed at the appropriate elegaic level. Robin's words were nicely chosen and he was not afraid to introduce the unusual word, phrase and poetic line. In the film it was, in a continuous sequence, first sung by Arthur Tracy (The Street Singer), played by Vincent Lopez and his Orchestra and sung by Crosby.

The song became very popular in its day despite its mournful theme and was recorded by many of the bands and balladeers.

Film: "The Big Broadcast" (Paramount: 1932) (Bing Crosby, Stuart Erwin)

(195) A GHOST OF A CHANCE (Ned Washington - Bing Crosby; Victor Young) Bru B 12474-A-B
Studio Orchestra

It might be fitting to suggest that this is a spiritless performance of an insubstantial composition but, in fact, both are robust enough. A short introduction by Lennie Hayton (pno) precedes a verse and chorus sung by Bing in his best ballad style with an appealing tenor sax linking the stanzas. Hayton (pno) again leads to a second chorus the first half of which Bing "da-de-da's", singing only the words of the title line, until a wraithlike clarinet, of which more might have been heard, dances to the bridge and the words are resumed. There is nothing wanting in Crosby's phrasing and the orchestral arrangement is well scored if a little uneven. The individual presence of the instruments is audible and interesting but the abrupt change of mood on the title lines of the second chorus is a little disconcerting.

The takes are distinguishable by the following line:

Take A: "and I'd be true"
Take B: "I'd be true"

When he recorded this song for the second time (on 21st April, 1954 for his autobiographical album) Bing referred to it as "a somewhat lugubrious lament with lyrics by Ned Washington". He didn't mention his collaboration but there is no doubt that he did help and so, no ghost writer, the composer credit was properly given. (See "Domenica" recorded on 9th May, 1961). The song is an example of how a well known saying can be used to create a popular success. ("I"m Putting All My Eggs In One Basket" and "Let's Face The Music" are others among many). Although the words are in no way exceptional they are apposite to the tune which is cleverly constructed with phrases on a single note for a wailing effect. It became a favourite of jazz instrumentalists, even before "soul", and was recorded by many of

them including Frank Trumbauer, Lester Young, Artie Shaw, Cab Calloway, Wild Bill Davison, George Shearing, Andy Kirk and by singers Billie Holiday, Mel Torme and Sarah Vaughan.

Film: "Please" (Paramount: 1933)(Bing Crosby, Mary Kornman)
Film: "Folies Bergere" (20th C-Fox: 1935) (M Chevalier, Merle Oberon) (UK title: "The Man From The Folies Bergere")

25th Oct 1932(New York)

(196) LINGER A LITTLE LONGER IN THE TWILIGHT (Jimmy Campbell - Reg Connelly; Harry Woods) Bru B 12500-A
Lennie Hayton & his Orchestra

Crosby sings a verse and chorus, whistles half a chorus and reprises the last sixteen bars. The cajoling refrain is dealt with competently but breaking the title line into two phrases doesn't in any way improve it and there are other instances where a more flowing style would have benefited the material. The verse mentions "songbirds" and the whistling obbligato, an apt bird-like warbling to a Tommy Dorsey (tbn) solo, is an engaging interlude. The song is a ballad lighter than most of those previously undertaken by Bing and despite weak lyrics the tune became popular.

For a decade from about 1926 Harry Woods, although having no fingers on his left hand but able to play one-handed piano, wrote many excellent songs that became very successful. Perhaps those most readily connected with Bing Crosby are "We're A Couple Of Soldiers", "Just An Echo In The Valley" and "Try A Little Tenderness".

(197) WE'RE A COUPLE OF SOLDIERS (Harry Woods) Bru B 12501-A-B
Lennie Hayton & his Orchestra

The military analogy predictably commences with a drum roll and trumpet flourish and then it is all Crosby with chorus, verse, chorus and reprised last stanza. The poor lyrics (e.g. "she patches my clothes, then I bring her a medal" - the medal is a rose, the colour of which depends upon the take) and the inferior tune hide the fact that Bing sings the song very well especially the verse. In the chorus he is accompanied by the orchestra with a marching beat and trumpet punctuations but the tempo varies for the verse with Lennie Hayton (pno) and Eddie Lang (gtr) in evidence. Bing starts the second chorus with a half-spoken line, the first chorus accompaniment being resumed, and he reprises a stirring last stanza before a trumpet coda.

It is highly probable that little would have been heard of this recording were it not for the second take which resolved into an amusing shambles. Although it is unnecessary to show any formal differences between the takes for purposes of identification the following do occur:

Take A: "a little red rose"; "and hope is never gone"
Take B: "a little white rose"; "hope is never gone"

The "blow up" (take B), which was recommenced after a false start when someone called out "wake up, wake up" to one of the musicians, proceeded correctly until halfway through Crosby's second chorus when after the line "we never give in" somebody, almost certainly Joe Venuti although one report suggested that it may have been Mannie Klein, no doubt expressing his opinion of either the words, the tune or life in general, emitted a "bronx cheer" (US) or "raspberry" (UK) to the vast amusement of all present especially Crosby who was unable to continue for laughter. Although the take was ruined he tried to regain his composure on, of all lines, "with a smile" but again relapsed into uncontrollable laughter recovering just sufficiently to gasp out a final line, "We're a couple of Nancies, Uncle Salvi and me". ("Uncle Salvi" referred to Eddie Lang whose real name was Salvatore Massaro). The take ends in utter confusion and laughter with someone calling, "Don't play this back". Of course, it was never commercially issued but copies fell into the hands of collectors and became a prize possession not least because of Crosby's spontaneous laughter which is so warm and infectious that it is virtually impossible to hear the recording without it raising a smile.

(198) BROTHER, CAN YOU SPARE A DIME? (E Y Harburg; Jay Gorney) Bru B 12502-A
Lennie Hayton & his Orchestra

Although this song was recorded by many other artists and bands it will forever be associated with Bing Crosby. His rendition of this theme song of the depression years and archetypal forerunner of protest songs of the 1960's was a perfect statement of human despair and social injustice. In a restrained verse, bemused and bewildered, he cannot understand why he has to suffer humiliation ("They used to tell me I was building a dream - I was always there right on the job - why should I be standing in line just waiting for bread?"). Then in the chorus he proudly relates his achievements, seeking to nullify the abasement of poverty and begging; the reprised heart-rending half chorus is set in ringing tones. The orchestra, with subdued accompaniment, allows full focus to fall upon the declamatory lyrics and Crosby expresses all the bitterness of deprivation by making every word tell. It was a huge hit for him and became one of his early uncredited million sale recordings.

E Y "Yip" Harburg, who died in a car crash in Hollywood in 1981, said that he did not make it "the maudling lyric of a guy begging" but a commentary, "the fellow who produces, the one who works, is left empty-handed at the end". Gorney's tune, though not melodious, is an admirable setting for the message. The song was first introduced on radio by opera singer Lawrence Tibbett.

In "Brother Can You Spare A Dime", a documentary film, the song is heard three times, sung by Bing Crosby, Al Jolson and Rudy Vallee all off-screen.

Show: "Americana" (1932) (Rex Weber)
Film: "They Shoot Horses, Don't They?" (1969) (Jane Fonda)
Film: "Brother Can You Spare A Dime" (1975)
Film: "Bugsy Malone" (1976) (Jodie Foster)

(199) SWEET SUE, JUST YOU (Will J Harris; Victor Young) Bru B 12505-A
Lennie Hayton (pno)

Lennie Hayton, as sole accompanist, shares the honours on this recording of Victor Young's 1928 success that offers, beyond any doubt, proof of Crosby's ability to perform as easily with a single instrumentalist as with a large band. Hayton's introduction and solo first chorus lay a jazz foundation in elegant style and the vocal chorus that follows is a lesson in relaxation. Bing takes his second chorus in well chosen scat phrases at a faster tempo that Hayton continues with a Waller-like sixteen delicious bars solo. Crosby returns to restore the lazy feeling in a reprise of the last half of the song with some gentle improvisations and Hayton's pretty little coda rounds off a fine performance.

Strangely enough, this recording was not issued until 1968. It had been re-discovered on a test pressing in 1961 and in May, 1964 Crosby told the author that he had no recollection of making it. It had, in fact, been recorded impromptu as it had been originally scheduled, with two other pieces, as a piano solo by Lennie Hayton.

The song has remained especially popular with jazz artists and been recorded by very many of them, including Joe Venuti, Tommy Dorsey, Ben Pollack, Quintet of the Hot Club of France, Mills Brothers, Fats Waller, Nat Gonella, Muggsy Spanier, Jimmie Lunceford, Chick Webb, Benny Goodman, Red Nichols, Paul Whiteman and Ted Lewis.

Film: "Rhythm Parade" (Monogram: 1942) (Mills Brothers)
Film: "They Shoot Horses, Don't They?" (1969) (Jane Fonda)

28th Oct 1932(New York)

(200) LET'S PUT OUT THE LIGHTS (Herman Hupfeld) Bru B 12510-A
Studio Orchestra

A piano and strings introduction leads to a verse, rather longer than usual, taken by Bing in a semi-conversational style in which he is accompanied only by piano. The orchestra is behind him for a chorus and takes over for the first sixteen bars of the next with trombone soloing, the Crosby whistle linking the lines, and brass alternating each four bars. Bing reprises the final sixteen bars and an orchestral coda plays out to the strains of "Goodnight Sweetheart". Crosby's phrasing is impeccable and he handles the anecdotal lyrics effortlessly with the middle passage especially well sung. In the reprise his interpolation of "you darling", substituted for "dear", is most effective.

Although the tune is in no way outstanding the idea for the song was well conceived and admirably depicts the society "after party" scene. Much of its success, however - and it was very successful with no band neglecting to play or record it - must be attributed to the notoriety it gained from the publicity attaching to the lyrics which were originally written as "let's put out the lights and go to bed", a suggestion that was too daringly innovative for the establishment to accept. Rudy Vallee first introduced the song and recorded it with the original words but when he wanted to use it as his "signing off" song on his Fleischman's Yeast Radio Programme, NBC objected and the offending word was changed to "sleep". Not surprisingly, the main cause of the objection was the final stanza wherein the remedy for having "no cute baby we can spank" was propounded with little subtlety. Rudy Vallee's recording was used for the soundtrack of the 1982 film.

Herman Hupfeld was a far from prolific composer but he wrote some good songs the best known being "As Time Goes By" (recorded by Bing Crosby on 20th July 1976).

Show: "George White's Music Hall Varieties" (1932) (Bert Lahr, Harry Richman, Eleanor Powell)
Film: "Pennies From Heaven" (MGM: 1982) (Steve Martin)

(201) I'LL FOLLOW YOU (Roy Turk; Fred E Ahlert) Bru B 12519-A-B
Studio Orchestra

A melancholy sounding introduction precedes a verse by Bing, on which he is accompanied by piano, and a chorus with orchestral accompaniment; he then "de-da-de's" eight bars and reprises the remainder of the chorus. It is a praiseworthy effort by the singer other, perhaps, than a distracting

break between the last two words in the verse line, "nothing can keep us apart". Unfortunately the arrangement shows little inspiration; Manny Klein's trumpet sounds at the end of some title lines but the orchestra is generally unimaginative. Crosby tries to rouse a little interest by entering behind the melody line on the first eight bars of his reprised section and with improvisations on the tune but it is a losing battle on a ground of poor material. The tune is dull, the lyrics worse and it would be charitable not to dissect them. It is surprising that it should be chosen for Bing and, incidentally, by Ethel Merman, Ruth Etting and Paul Whiteman, to record.

The takes are virtually identical with only slight variations in the "da-de-da" phrases.

4th Nov 1932(New York)

(202) JUST AN ECHO IN THE VALLEY (Jimmy Campbell-Reg Connelly; Harry Woods)
Studio Orchestra — Bru B 12530-A

The orchestra plays a suitably wistful introduction to a first chorus by Crosby who follows it with a verse on which he is accompanied by only a piano. A second chorus has the orchestra leading, featuring solo trombone, for the first sixteen bars with Bing whistling the "echoes" and last line of each of the stanzas; he reprises the second half of the chorus, accompanied by only piano through the bridge, with the orchestra continuing into a coda that prolongs the "echo". The tune evokes all the yearning expressed in the lyrics sung here so appealingly, the verse being handled very tenderly and gently.

The song was a big success for Crosby and the fact that neither the words nor tune were in any way exceptional speaks well for the interpretation and arrangement. The lyrics show no originality and little effort would have been required, for instance, to have avoided the tautology of the first two lines of the verse; when, in the chorus, we are again reminded that it is twilight we suspect that the time of day has become something of an obsession with the lyricists. The tune is no "Indian Love Call" (and that wasn't Friml's best) but Crosby must have held it in some regard for he chose to record it again, on 21st April 1954, for his autobiographical album when he referred to the song as having been a possible replacement for "Old Blue". When, in January 1933, he began a radio series for Chesterfield Cigarettes it was thought that the listening public might prefer a change and for a time he used the song for his signature tune but soon returned to "Where The Blue Of The Night".

The tune proved adaptable enough; written as a fox-trot it was sometimes played as a waltz by dance bands and was popularly recorded by many of

them including Ted FioRito, Ray Noble (with an Al Bowlly vocal), Henry Hall and by many solo artists including a success by Layton and Johnstone.

The title of a 1933 Crosby film short was taken from that of the song and in "College Humor" it was included in a classroom medley when, as a Professor, he lectured on "Great Love Scenes From Drama"; a few lines were sung in "Going Hollywood".

Film: "Just An Echo" (Paramount; 1933) (Bing Crosby, Mary Kornman)
Film: "College Humour" (Paramount: 1933) (Bing Crosby, Mary Carlisle)
Film: "Going Hollywood" (MGM: 1933) (Bing Crosby, Marion Davies)

(203) SOME DAY WE'LL MEET AGAIN (Al Goodhart, Al Hoffman, Milton Ager)
Studio Orchestra — Bru B 12531-A

A verse and chorus, sung by Crosby with the orchestra in which Eddie Lang (gtr) and strings are prominent, are followed by sixteen bars of viola and guitar and a reprise by Bing of the last half of the chorus. The song is the story of a parting but it is impossible, listening to the pathos that is brought to it, to believe that it is any ordinary parting: surely "when spring is sweet again" refers to a re-union other than an earthly one and we are being made privy to a death scene. The poetry of the lyrics and the bitter-sweet melody is redolent of a song from an early-century musical comedy or operetta filled with Victorian or Edwardian sentiment. The inclusion of "adieu" and "au revoir" even lend the Continental touch that was often a feature of those shows. As such it has largely been dismissed out-of-hand as "dated" and its merits ignored but nonetheless adds further proof to Coward's dictum, "strange how potent cheap music is".

The practice, in the early 1930's, of including a verse in a recording was an admirable one but all too soon, mainly for commercial reasons, it was to cease as a general feature. The verse in this recording is evidence of how necessary one could be. Though usually a "throw-away" musically, a verse had at least the merit of setting the mood and scene before reaching the more important chorus and occasionally had a melodic and lyric worth of its own, e.g. "Stardust", "Waltzing In A Dream". The omission of such verses is unforgivable but, fortunately, no such mistake has been made here; it is a beautiful melody and is most beautifully sung. It is, in fact, so good that what follows is something of an anti-climax and not because the chorus is poor. It isn't poor and it would, standing alone, be considered worthy enough but the poignancy of the verse melody and Crosby's treatment and tones are so powerful that it is an almost impossible act to follow.

Although the key is less than ideal for Bing his rendition is a magnificent effort and he is not prevented from finishing on a high note. It was to become a notable feature of his style that he could deliver certain lines in a manner and tone entirely distinctive and individual. This song provides some splendid early examples such as "my heart forever more will hold a sigh" and "some day my love will find you". He brings an intense, vibrant emotion to the words and an overwhelming air of sorrow pervades. When, at the end of the chorus, his voice breaks slightly on the word "spring" it is hard to believe that it is unintentional and that he is not truly overcome; on the reprise the word presents no difficulty. The orchestral arrangement, too, is excellent with a lovely viola and guitar passage. Listen with a handkerchief at the ready, especially to that oh, so sad verse.

9th Dec 1932(New York)

(204) STREET OF DREAMS (Sam M Lewis; Victor Young) Bru B 12706-A-B
Studio Orchestra

The introduction has an intriguing melody line that is worthy of repetition in the song but, unfortunately, is not heard again. Crosby then takes up the burden of the song with a verse and chorus, there is a musical interlude and the singer repeats a full chorus. It is all atmosphere and no-one was better than Crosby at setting a mood, which he does here with an immaculate skill; his phrasing and timing are flawless and the musical arrangement is in happy association. The trombonist (probably Tommy Dorsey) has a complete solo chorus, with no deviation from the melody, in which he is well supported by Eddie Lang (gtr) and Lennie Hayton (pno).

An examination of the lyrics more than a half-century after they were written makes for no easy enlightenment: the title, known for its description of Broadway, has no such application here and no amount of detective work provides a ready solution to its meaning. One must surmise that Sam Lewis was creating a fantasy of his own - a "riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma" - by setting the time ("you've gotta get there at midnight" with "dew heavy-laden") for his cryptic metaphors. What, for instance can be made of the contradictory "brothers as blue, smiling on the street of dreams" and "silver and gold, all you can hold, is in the moonbeams"? Incidentally, Bing's interpolation, in the reprise, of the word "you're" before the line "poor, no one is poor" makes nonsense of any meaning the phrase might otherwise have. Is all that the lyricist means is that love is for dreamers or is there something obscurely profound or even sinister in his fancies - a psychological nightmare? The most likely explanation offered is that it was his vision of the New York drugs scene of the 1930's.

The takes are very similar - even the three words added before lines in the reprised chorus are the same - but the one difference makes them easy to determine:

Take A: "and your new dreams for old"
Take B: "your new dreams for old"

The song was also successfully recorded by Russ Columbo, Morton Downey, Tommy Dorsey and his Orchestra (with a Frank Sinatra vocal), The Inkspots and Peggy Lee.

(205) IT'S WITHIN YOUR POWER (Mack Gordon; Harry Revel) Bru B 12707-A
Studio Orchestra

The strings, brief clarinet and a piano flourish introduce a verse sung by Bing with only Lennie Hayton (pno) as accompanist. The orchestra joins the accompaniment for a chorus and takes over for the next sixteen bars of which Bing hums a couple of lines and Jimmy Dorsey (clt) takes a twelve bars solo before Bing returns to reprise the last half of the chorus. No one seems to take the lover's plight too seriously, which is all to the good as the lyrics repeat only what had been said so many, many times before ("you can make me - happy or blue - beggar or king - master or slave") *ad nauseum*. Bing sings well, phrasing expertly and always master of the situation. The final chorus with Dorsey's clear tone and Bing swinging it gently as a light ballad is delightful.

This was the first of many Gordon and Revel compositions that Bing was to record but was not among their best. Neither the tune nor words excelled but although Gordon's lyrics were repetitive in meaning he managed to include a couple of mid-line rhymes ("hold me, mould me" and "dearly, sincerely") and the somewhat unusual "domain", if rather awkwardly, to rhyme with "rain". Gordon and the English-born Revel became one of the great song-writing teams of the 1930's and wrote many film songs, some of them for Crosby.

1933

The year 1932 ended with Bing Crosby as the nation's foremost popular singer and in the ascendant. His exemplary recording performances had brought a new dimension to the singing of popular songs and during 1933 there were some of a magnificence never before attained, proving him to be far ahead of all others. He starred in three feature films and their release and the continuing issue of his recordings in the UK, the Australian continent and other countries consolidated his international reputation.

In January he commenced a series of twice-weekly appearances on the Chesterfield Cigarettes (CBS) radio show which also featured Eddie Lang (gtr) with Lennie Hayton leading the orchestra. On 26th March Eddie Lang died following a tonsillectomy. Bing returned to Hollywood to make the first of the feature films, "College Humor". It was quickly followed by "Too Much Harmony" during the making of which his first son, Gary Evan Crosby, was born on 27th June. Later in the year he was loaned by Paramount to MGM and made the film "Going Hollywood". He also commenced a weekly radio series for Woodbury's Soap (CBS). The year ended with his being in the top ten box-office stars and with his records being among the highest sellers.

9th Jan 1933(New York)

(206) I'M PLAYING WITH FIRE (Irving Berlin) Bru B 12856-A
Studio Orchestra

Although one of Berlin's minor creations the song was very popular at the time and this recording helped it considerably. After an orchestral introduction, with trombone lead, Crosby takes a splendid chorus, nicely phrased and with well balanced dynamics. His verse is followed by an eight bars solo from Tommy Dorsey (tbn) with a saxophone obbligato that continues for the first eight bars of Bing's reprise of the remainder of the chorus. The chorus has an appealing melody that the singer makes the most of - his "but what can I do?" is torment in the knowledge of the inevitable outcome - but the verse is dull. It would have been better placed before the chorus to avoid the melodic lapse midway through the recording but its last two lines are given a lift by Crosby's treatment. His effort to improve it earlier, however, is less successful and the word "dear", with a stammered effect, sounds peculiar. The reprise, melody restored, is a perfect performance (other than for an unlikely falter at the end of the line "merry-go-rounding with you") with the last two lines full of despair. Oddly, four years later the verse was refurbished by Berlin, with altered time values and other variations, into a succesful melody for the song "I've Got My Love To Keep Me Warm".

The song was recorded by many dance bands and, for bad measure, by the German "Charlie's Orchestra" with parody lyrics for Nazi propaganda.

(207) TRY A LITTLE TENDERNESS (Jimmy Campbell-Reg Connelly; Harry Woods)
Studio Orchestra Bru B 12857-A-B

Jimmy Dorsey's clarinet, ascending from the chalumeau register, introduces a Crosby verse and two choruses of verbal molasses. The song would today be an anachronism, requiring less than the extreme views of a male chauvinist to find its heavy sentimentality nauseous or those of Women's Lib to find them degrading. Yet it cannot be denied that it enjoyed immense popularity in 1933 as a song of its time in spite of patronising lyrics and *non sequiturs*. The fact that Crosby sings it with all the considerable solicitude that he could muster only makes worse the idea that it should be taken seriously. Inevitably, the violins appear behind Bing as he "da-de-da's" the second chorus. It is a worthy challenger to "Sonny Boy".

It was only to be expected that every male in the business would wish to express his concern about the downtrodden plight - weary, waiting, grief,

care etc - of women and, apart from dance bands, manly shoulders were offered, on record, by stalwarts such as Tennessee Ernie Ford, Mel Torme, Frank Sinatra and Josef Locke. It was also recorded by Ruth Etting.

The two most easily detected differences in the takes are:

(i) in the line "Love is their whole happiness" the first two words are sung on different notes in take A; on the same note in take B

(ii) in the line "You won't regret it" of the reprise, the singer keeps to the melody in take A; he deviates from the melody in take B

12th Jan 1933(New York)

There has for long been curiosity among collectors about the teaming on this session of Crosby and Guy Lombardo, an unlikely combination at a time when Bing was mainly associated with musicians of a different stamp. Lombardo had left Columbia the previous year and signed a contract with Brunswick and this pairing was no doubt the idea of Jack Kapp, the Brunswick recording manager, in an early attempt to broaden the singer's appeal. It has been suggested that Crosby over-dubbed his vocal but this was a procedure unlikely to have been followed at the time and aural evidence suggests otherwise.

Guy Lombardo and his Royal Canadians were already very popular and were to remain so for more than four decades as the foremost commercially successful dance band. Guy and his three brothers, Carmen (alt sax and arranger), Lebert (tpt) and Victor (bar sax), formed the band as youths in Canada and were to stay togther until retirement or death. Carmen was also the composer of several popular songs. The theme song of the band was "Auld Lang Syne" and its slogan, "The Sweetest Music This Side Of Heaven".

(208) YOU'RE GETTING TO BE A HABIT WITH ME (Al Dubin; Harry Warren) Br B 12887-A-B
Guy Lombardo & his Royal Canadians

In order, presumably, to create parity between a very popular, well established band that could hardly be expected to take a subordinate accompanying role and the more recent favourite, Bing's contribution to the session's three recordings was reduced to little more than "vocal refrain". In this, the first of the three, the introduction is led by brother Lebert (tpt); the famed "sweet" saxophone section lead through a chorus with the brass section taking the verse lead before Crosby enters. He sings a chorus with such ease that any possible restriction imposed by the continued "strict

dance band" tempo matters not at all. The orchestra, brass section leading, plays the bridge passage and Bing returns for the last stanza in which one can sense that he would prefer a more virile and rhythmic backing. The takes can be identified by the penultimate line of the chorus:

Take A: "Can't break it"
Take B: "Can't shake it"

Bing had previously recorded a couple of songs by Al Dubin and one by Harry Warren but this was his first of theirs written as a team. They produced their best work together and became one of the greatest partnerships to write songs for films. This song was well constructed and its lyrics cleverly played on drug addiction. Many recordings of the song, first made popular by Bebe Daniels in the film "42nd Street", were made including those by Ben Selvin, Fred Waring, Frank Sinatra, Peggy Lee, Doris Day and Jackie Gleason & his Orchestra. Crosby featured it in a Paramount short film and when it was sung by Doris Day and Gene Neslon in "Lullaby Of Broadway" they were accompanied on piano by Buddy Cole, in later years to be closely associated with Bing.

Film: "42nd Street" (Warner Bros: 1933) (Warner Baxter, Dick Powell, Ruby Keeler, Bebe Daniels, Ginger Rogers)
Film: "Please" (Paramount; 1933)(Bing Crosby, Mary Kornman)
Film: "Lullaby Of Broadway" (Warner Bros: 1951) (Doris Day)

(209) YOUNG AND HEALTHY (Al Dubin; Harry Warren) Br B 12888-A-B
Guy Lombardo & his Royal Canadians

A precise arrangement commences with a trumpet announcement (Lebert Lombardo) and a chorus by the saxophone section with brass punctuations and piano runs in the bridge. Crosby sings the next chorus accompanied by a guitar obbligato that is good enough to be by Eddie Lang. The brass section plays a crisp verse and Bing follows with a chorus of scat with the bridge passage whistled to sax accompaniment. The final chorus is shared, the brass playing sixteen bars staccato and Crosby reprising the second half with guitar backing through the bridge. If the orchestra does sound too choppy Bing's performance is superb and completely relaxed; the scat chorus is entirely apposite to the song's title, happy and bracing, while the exuberant reprised half chorus is full of vigour, exemplified by the line, "looks like I"m full of that vitamin A". It is, indeed, a tonic.

The takes differ in the scat section but a melody line from Gershwin's song, "Oh, Lady Be Good", is included in both takes indicating that it was intentional. On the line, "tell me what am I to do", the word "to" is sung on a higher note than "do" in take A and on a lower note in take B.

This was another excellent song from the composers and written for

the same film as the previous recording. Dubin makes some neat double rhymes in the last lines of the stanzas and lyrics and tune are well matched. The BBC, however, were unhappy with the lines,

"I'm young and healthy
So let's be bold
In a year or two or three
Maybe we will be too old"

and banned broadcasting of the recording when it was first issued. It was featured in the film by Dick Powell.

Film: "42nd Street" (Warner Bros: 1933) (Warner Baxter, Dick Powell, Ruby Keeler, Bebe Daniels, Ginger Rogers)

(210) YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL TONIGHT, MY DEAR (Joe Young; Carmen Lombardo) Br B 12889-A-B
Guy Lombardo & his Royal Canadians

On this, the last of the three with Lombardo, Crosby has only one chorus; it is no more than a dance band record "with vocal refrain" which, perhaps, is just as well for it is utterly trite. The tune is commonplace and the words banal. A chorus has the melody lead by Lebert Lombardo (tpt) with a tinkling piano and there is a verse before the vocal. A final, monotonously arranged chorus ends with the Lombardo cymbal trademark. The vocal chorus cannot be faulted and the singer shows more enthusiasm, especially in a strongly delivered last sixteen bars, than the song deserves.

On take A the words, "..I fear an angel..", are sung without pause; take B has a pause between "fear" and "an". On the last line there is a pause between "beautiful" and "tonight" in take A but not in take B.

Film: "Just An Echo" (Paramount: 1933) (Bing Crosby, Mary Kornman)

26th Jan 1933(New York)

(211) I'VE GOT THE WORLD ON A STRING (Ted Koehler;Harold Arlen) Br B 12991-A-B
Dorsey Brothers & their Orchestra

Orchestra personnel

Bunny Berigan (tpt); Tommy Dorsey (tbn); Jimmy Dorsey (clt); Harry Hoffman (vln); Fulton McGrath (pno); Eddie Lang (gtr); Artie Bernstein (bs); Stan King (dms)

(There is doubt about the identity of the clarinetist. Some discographies show Benny Goodman but he has been quoted as expressing his regret that he never worked with Bing Crosby. It is unlikely, therefore, that had he done so he would have forgotten)

In contrast to the previous session this is nearly all Crosby, taking a verse, chorus and most of the second chorus. The orchestra seems rather subdued and there is no solo from Lang: in the bridge passage of the first chorus Berigan (tpt) echoes the vocal phrases of three lines and Tommy Dorsey (tbn) does the same on the fourth line. (Strangely, take B has Dorsey replaced by McGrath (pno)). The second chorus commences with a short, six bars, solo by Berigan (tpt) with Bing singing the next two lines, a formula repeated for the next stanza but with Tommy Dorsey (tbn) taking the solo; a weaving clarinet links the solos. Crosby's vocal is solid enough but a little dramatic for the sentiment expressed and seems to be an assembly of separate phrases that prevents a smooth flow of the melody. It is not until the last eight bars of the reprise that he relaxes into a jazz idiom and swings to a high finish. Nevertheless it became a million seller.

Take A has Bing singing "If I should ever let go" but on take B the line is altered to "If I should ever let you go".

Immensely popular, especially among jazz musicians, the song has been the subject of many recordings including those by Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Bennie Carter, Red McKenzie, Cab Calloway, "Hot Lips" Page, Woody Herman, Mildred Bailey, Xavier Cugat, Perry Como, Frank Sinatra and Mel Torme.

Show: "Cotton Club Parade of 1932"
Film: "I'll Get By" (20th C-Fox: 1950) (Gloria de Haven, June Haver, Harry James, Dan Dailey)

(212) MY HONEY'S LOVIN' ARMS (Herman Ruby; Joseph Meyer) Br B 12992-A-B
Mills Brothers (John, Herbert, Harry, Donald)
Dorsey Brothers & their Orchestra (personnel: see 211)

Sadly, this was the third and last of the Crosby - Mills Brothers recordings and like its predecessors (recorded on 16th December, 1931 and 29th February, 1932) is a loving work of genuine artistry. One's feelings towards Jack Kapp are truly ambivalent- gratitude for this trio of little masterpieces and regret that he didn't arrange for more. Tommy Dorsey's tender, even sad, trombone introduction and Lang's guitar chords are entirely deceptive as the mood instantly changes with a fine swinging chorus from Bing, followed by another by the Mills with their simulation of instruments. Harry Hoffman (vln) sparks the next chorus, the brothers supplying a rhythmic backing to Crosby's inspired jazz phrasing of the lyrics. Yet another chorus has everyone taking a part: the orchestra leads with each of the front line instruments taking a short break in happy abandon and all thoughts of "a cosy Morris chair" quite forgotten; Bing and the Quartet join them to land right in their honey's lovin' arms before the band play a

breezy jazz coda led by Bunny Berigan (tpt). It is a bright, happy record to lift anyone's spirits and sold a million copies.

In a recording of this nature there are, inevitably, many differences in phrasing and one of interest is the way in which Bing sings the penultimate line in the third chorus of take A. "I know that I belong" is so close to Jolson's style and intonation that it is difficult to believe other than that it is a deliberate mimicry, clowning that sounds just right for this cheerful occasion. To identify the takes reference may be made to the line "a cosy Morris chair" in the second chorus when, in take B, Bing sings "just a cosy Morris chair".

The song was written in 1922 and has been recorded many times, the perky tune inviting interpretation by such as Benny Goodman, Red Nichols, Bobby Hackett, Duke Ellington and the Original Memphis Five.

9th Feb 1933(New York)

(213) WHAT DO I CARE, IT'S HOME (Roy Turk; Harry Smolin) Br B 13043-A-B
Studio Orchestra

There can be only two possible reasons why Crosby recorded this embarrassing twaddle: either he and the boys had been on a binge the previous night and were now expunging their guilt in maudlin atonement to "mom", or Jack Kapp was holding him at knife-point. "You may think it's rough", sings Bing and he will get no argument. From the dramatic pause in the second line of the verse to the end of the reprised half-chorus it is knee-high mush all the way. The song, a worthy companion to "Sonny Boy" and "Try A Little Tenderness", may have been Smolin's sole effort - and little wonder if it was - but although the melody has little merit the real credit for this opus must go to Roy Turk with lines like "blue is up above" and "one tree, no less and no more". After Crosby's verse and chorus Tommy Dorsey (tbn) has a sixteen bars solo without deviation from the melody line.

The line "It's a weathered shanty" is preceded by "though" in take A but not in take B.

(214) YOU'VE GOT ME CRYING AGAIN (Charles Newman; Isham Jones) Br B 13044-A
Studio Orchestra

There is a rather lengthier than usual introduction to a verse and chorus well sung by Bing. Phrased most appealingly throughout, the sentiments expressed are hardly new but are made to sound fresh and sincere as he

gently reproaches the capriciousness of the girl. The verse lines, "one day you love me, next day we're through", sung without break are particularly effective. A vocal mannerism appears in the last line of the verse - "N'and in a little while". The orchestra has a chorus to itself, with Jimmy Dorsey (clt), Eddie Lang (gtr), piano and violin making themselves heard, before Bing reprises the chorus with some melodic variations.

It is a good song with a flowing melody and theme well expressed and is a typical 1930's "torch" song. Ruth Etting featured it in an early two reel comedy film; it became extremely popular and was recorded by all and sundry including composer Isham Jones, Connie Boswell, Dick Todd, Lee Wiley, Phil Harris, Billy Eckstine, Dean Martin and jazz exponents Adrian Rollini, Coleman Hawkins and Buddy Rich.

Film: "Knee Deep In Music" (Two reel comedy) (Ruth Etting)

14th Mar 1933(New York)

(215) SOMEONE STOLE GABRIEL'S HORN (Ned Washington - Irving Mills; Edgar Hayes)
Dorsey Brothers & their Orchestra Br B 13149-A

Orchestra personnel
Bunny Berigan (tpt); Tommy Dorsey (tbn); Jimmy Dorsey (clt); Larry Binyon (ten); Fulton McGrath (pno); Dick McDonough (gtr); Artie Bernstein (bs); Stan King (dms)

The arrangement, attributed to Glenn Miller although he was not in the orchestra, has a dirge-like introduction before Bing tells, in negro spiritual form, of the archangel's loss and its consequences. The orchestra plays eight bars ensemble with clarinet floating high but he "can't tell when you all play" and "let's try each one of you alone". After a chorus with short solos from clarinet, saxophone, piano and trumpet Crosby decides in a final stanza that "Mr Gabe" would be glad to hire them as replacements in his old age. The pastiche is well arranged, well played and Crosby's voice timbre is admirably suited. The lyrics are good but an obvious mid-line rhyme was missed towards the end of the chorus with the choice of "hopping" instead of "pouting" (like a pigeon) when the next line is "you'll be shouting sweet religion".

The song was also recorded by Jack Teagarden, Washboard Rhythm Kings, Spike Hughes and Nat Gonella.

(216) STAY ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE ROAD (Ted Koehler; Rube Bloom) Br B 13150-A-B
Dorsey Brothers & their Orchestra (personnel: see 215)

Continuing the pseudo-religious theme, Crosby is a preacher "shouting" to his flock down in Jimtown, Tennessee, exhorting all to "look out for old man Satan". First, however, there is a bright, uplifting chorus from the band before Bing's verse and chorus which he follows with a couple of spoken lines before leaving the pulpit. Two swinging choruses that would sway any congregation, the second with solos by Berigan (tpt), Binyon (ten) and Jimmy Dorsey (clt), conclude the service. Bing is in his element, the band are in obvious enjoyment and all share a happy faith. ("Sinners hit the trail when they start in to wail").

The tune and lyrics are neatly constructed; the riff-like stanzas have a melodic contrast in the short bridge passage with its effective couplet about the devil and Hallelujah land.

In the spoken lines in take A, Bing says "Don't delay"; in take B he says "Do not delay". Another variation, easily missed, occurs in the title phrase in the second stanza when, in take B, Bing changes it to "bright side of the road".

Other recordings of the song were made by Ruth Etting, Ray Noble and his Orchestra (Al Bowlly vocal) and Doris Day.

Film: "Love Me Or Leave Me" (MGM: 1955) (Doris Day, James Cagney) (The film was based on the life of Ruth Etting)

(217) HERE IS MY HEART (Ballard; Henderson) Br B 13151-A
Dorsey Brothers & their Orchestra (personnel: see 215)

There are a number of curious things about this recording not least, perhaps, being its inclusion in a session that was otherwise comprised of all jazz or up-tempo numbers. (The session included, in addition to the two previous songs, two Dorsey Brothers Orchestra numbers without Crosby, "Mood Hollywood" and "Shim Sham Shimmy"). Nobody seems to give other than routine attention to proceedings that consist only of two and a half choruses. Tommy Dorsey (tbn) has two eight bar solos in the opening chorus, Crosby takes a chorus and the orchestra returns for a final half chorus in which Tommy Dorsey (tbn) and Bunny Berigan (tpt) in turn take the melody lead. Perhaps it was considered to be a break from the serious business of the day. The band has none of the "Dorsey" sound and Bing's performance is erratic: whilst some lines are delivered with all the beauty that one had now come to expect (e.g. "here's all my love", "here are my arms") the impact of other lines is weakened by inattentiveness.

The pause after the second word in the line "and how they long for you" is careless; even worse is the break after "star" in "when every star whispers delight" which otherwise would have been delightful and the voice falters on a couple of words, "song" and "part".

The recording was, for whatever reason, not issued at the time that it was made but was rediscovered more than twenty years later and it appeared on an LP in April, 1959. It was then wrongly assumed to be from the film of the same name that Crosby had made in 1934. It was thus incorrectly attributed to the composers of the film score, Leo Robin and Ralph Rainger. The song had, in fact, been written by Ballard and Henderson a year before Bing made the film. It was not greatly popular but was also recorded by Rudy Vallee and his Connecticut Yankees.

9th June 1933(Los Angeles)

This was Bing's first recording session since his return to California and his first with Jimmy Grier's orchestra, a very popular west coast large commercial dance band. These recordings and those that followed later in the year are regarded by most aficionados as being the pinnacle achievements of his early, if not entire, career.

(218) LEARN TO CROON (Sam Coslow; Arthur Johnston) Br B 779-A
Jimmy Grier & his Orchestra

Only a few copies of this recording were issued and the song was recorded again four days later with the same arrangement but with a different master number. Details and means of identification are shown under the later recording (q.v.).

(219) MOONSTRUCK (Sam Coslow; Arthur Johnston) Br B 780-A
Jimmy Grier & his Orchestra

Crosby handles this with absolute perfection: phrasing, dynamics, tone, authority are all utterly convincing. Every line, indeed every word, is given its exact value: from the restraint of the verse with its superb last two lines and the wonderment of his being spellbound and bewildered to the reckless abandon of being "heaven or hellbound', from the emotional perplexity of what attracts and distracts him to an awareness of a "strange new flame" he weaves his own spell. It is a superlative performance. The orchestra

gives firm support but after the vocal verse and chorus it takes half a chorus in a somewhat plodding, strict dance tempo before Bing reprises the last half with some tremendous lines especially in the bridge ("I cannot seem to name").

The song was the "romantic ballad" included in Coslow and Johnston's excellent film score and has an appealing tune and strong lyrics that, despite a "moon-June", has other less obvious rhymes and accord both in mood and metre with the musical phrases.

Although Crosby virtually cornered the market with the songs from his film it was recorded by others including dance bands, Al Bowlly and Fran Frey. Sam Coslow made a few recordings himself as a vocalist and this song was one of them.

Film: "College Humor" (Paramount: 1933) (Bing Crosby, Mary Carlisle, Jack Oakie, Richard Arlen)

(220) MY LOVE (Ned Washington; Victor Young) Br B 781-A
Jimmy Grier & his Orchestra

Crosby continues in powerful voice but, unfortunately, this song lacks real quality and any attraction it offers is due almost entirely to the rendition. After an eight bars introduction by the orchestra Bing sings a verse ("bursting with emotion") and a chorus in which his power and tone, especially in the first line of each stanza, must have been a revelation at the time and has since lost little of its impact. His timbre and delivery of lines such as "My love is such a great love" are typical of the force and authority that made him pre-eminent. After an orchestral sixteen bars Bing reprises the second half of the chorus that demonstrates effectively his widening vocal range. The orchestra gives adequate, solid support and, led by the brass section, has a full-bodied sound in the non-vocal passage.

The song, perhaps a direct descendant of early operetta, is tuneful, other than the middle passage which is a let down, but the lyrics are unoriginal. Russ Columbo and Glen Gray and the Casa Loma Orchestra also recorded the song.

(221) I'VE GOT TO PASS YOUR HOUSE (Lew Brown) Br B 782-A-B
Jimmy Grier & his Orchestra

The orchestra introduces this recording with appropriate clock chimes and Bing's two line prelude tells us that it is six o'clock and his work is done. It is, however. no time for rejoicing and in what must be one of his finest ever recordings he plumbs the depths of despair. There are so many

vocal highlights and virtually every line is perfect. Particularly outstanding are the apprehensive "but my blues have just begun", the despair of the title line, the self-pity of "wondering who is sitting with you", the commiserable "for in your eyes ... just deep sympathy", the effective small dramatic pause after "I think I care until" and the forlorn "she may change her mind". If, perhaps, a less resounding high note finish to the song might have more aptly reflected the gloom and misery it amply demonstrates Crosby's power, range and tone. It is a magnificent performance with the orchestral arrangement, being the best yet provided by Jimmy Grier, also lending a befitting melancholy to the occasion.

The takes are almost identical but can be recognised by the line "it just had to be" (take A) and "it just has to be" (take B).

Lew Brown (of De Sylva, Brown and Henderson) was primarily a lyricist and achieved no lasting fame as a composer but this song was very good indeed, the lyrics being exceptional in their sensitivity. The song did not meet with the success it deserved - neither did this recording of it - but the depression years had not passed and perhaps the feeling of dejection was too close to actual experience.

Other recordings were made by Gertrude Niesen, Victor Young and Don Cherry.

13th Jun 1933(Los Angeles)

(222) BLUE PRELUDE (Gordon Jenkins; Joe Bishop) Br B 791-A-B
Jimmy Grier & his Orchestra

After an eight bars introduction by the orchestra Bing takes a chorus and the orchestra returns for sixteen bars with a good clarinet solo before the singer concludes with a reprise of the last half of the chorus. All the sentiments of pain and heartbreak expressed in the previous recording are repeated here, again with Crosby in superb voice. Faultless phrasing and emphasis make every line tell with the frustration of "let me go 'way from this lonely town", the bitterness of "all the love I could steal ... in my soul" and the distress of "with a heartbreak ahead for your goal" being especially pointed and making the suffering almost tangible. The band gives excellent support despite a rather thumping drums and rhythm section; the clarinet solo has been variously attributed to James Briggs, Art Grier and, less likely, Jimmy Dorsey.

In the reprise Bing sings "what is love but a prelude" in take A and "what is love just a prelude" in take B.

The song was popular among jazz players and became Woody Herman's first theme tune. Lyricist Gordon Jenkins recorded it with his orchestra;

others to record it were Boyd Raeburn, Glen Gray, Adrian Rollini, Dukes of Dixieland, Isham Jones, Paul Weston, Lew Stone (Al Bowlly vocal), Lena Horne, Judy Garland and Bing's son, Gary.

(223) I WOULD IF I COULD BUT I CAN'T (Mitchell Parish - Bing Crosby; Lanny Grey) Br B 792-A
Jimmy Grier & his Orchestra

It is to be regretted that during this period, while Crosby was in such fine voice, that the quality of the material didn't always match his consistency. He does everything that could be done with this second-rate song but it isn't enough to save it. He is accompanied by only a piano on the verse, the orchestra entering for his chorus and then playing an uninspiring half chorus before Bing reprises the last sixteen bars; brass chords play a defiant finale. The tune doesn't quite attain mediocrity and the lyrics fit it so uncomfortably that it seems they had been written for an entirely different melody. Can these words, with or without the help of Bing Crosby, really be the work of the same man that wrote the poetry of "Stardust"? Even the title immediately brings to mind George Formby whose writers would no doubt have made a better job of it for him. Crosby himself must have been dismayed for it was nearly thirty years before he again ventured into lyric writing ("Domenica": recorded May, 1961 (q.v.))

(224) LEARN TO CROON (Sam Coslow; Arthur Johnston) Br B 793-A-B
Jimmy Grier & his Orchestra

Only four days had passed since this song had been recorded but here it was again with the same arrangement but with a different master number. Bing gives it exactly the same treatment, i.e. chorus, verse and chorus sung in identical fashion. The second chorus varies a little from the first with the second and third lines being "da-de-da'd". The singing is so deceptively easy and effective that there is little wonder that everyone thought they could do as well; that is, of course, until they tried. The song had a great success - better, perhaps, than its true worth deserved - which was entirely due to Crosby and it became one that was to be forever associated with him. It is not a bad song but the melody line is unexceptional and its strengths lay in Coslow's opportunism in turning to advantage the derogatory phrase "crooner" and the fact that its limited melodic range had everybody, professional and amateur alike, singing it. It was, furthermore, a not unwelcome diversion from the heavy ballads.

The recording of 9th June (B 779-A) is almost identical with the B 793 takes but in the first chorus after "just murmur" the "da-de-da" phrase is sung on seven syllables and only six on the later recording. The B 793

takes can be recognised in the first chorus on the title line after the words "closer to you": on take A "to croon" are sung on the same note; on take B "croon" is sung on a higher note.

In January, 1931 a musical ("You Said It" with Stanley Smith and Lyda Roberti in the cast) opened on Broadway with a score that included a song called "Learn To Croon" written by Jack Yellen and Harold Arlen. From wherever Sam Coslow conceived his idea of a song with the same title for the film "College Humor" it was a good one and excellently fitted into the context of a Professor teaching his class. The term "crooner", applied indiscriminately in those days to all singers who adapted to microphone technique, was not meant to be complimentary (those who saw Bing Crosby in the Paramount 1931 two reel film, "Blue Of The Night", may recall Franklin Pangborn's withering "c-rooner" description of the hero) but Coslow's neatly turned, tongue-in-cheek lyrics brought a deserved reward.

On 9th June, the day that Bing made his first recording of the song, Jimmy Grier and his Cocoanut Grove Orchestra also recorded it and "Moonstruck" as band recordings, both vocals being by Donald Novis. It was also recorded by the lyricist, Sam Coslow , and by Al Bowlly, Fran Frey and most of the dance bands.

The song was part of an excellent score from the first film in which Crosby starred for Paramount. For the autobiography album he recorded, on 21st April 1954, the amusing comments that "Oakie and Arlen played in the backfield and I was a Professor of Music. I never did know what the story was all about. Mary Carlisle sat in the front row in all my classes and I guess that sort of threw me off. I flunked Oakie and Arlen but a couple of great tunes graduated". In "Too Much Harmony" Bing sings a couple of lines from the song and in the other two films he is heard singing it off-screen.

Film: "College Humor" (Paramount: 1933) (Bing Crosby, Mary Carlisle)
Film: "Too Much Harmony" (Paramount: 1933) (Bing Crosby, Judith Allen)
Film: "Duffy's Tavern" (Paramount: 1944) (Ed Gardner and all star cast)
Film" "Jolson Sings Again" (Columbia: 1950) (Larry Parks, Barbara Hale and the voice of Al Jolson)

(225) SHADOW WALTZ (Al Dubin; Harry Warren) Br B 794-A
Jimmy Grier & his Orchestra

This pretty tune, written for a Busby Berkeley film production number, was ideal for its purpose but has little substance out of its original context.

The melody is attractively composed in the form of an old "hesitation" type waltz and the lyrics fit the tune well but have no literal significance. Crosby, with minimum effort, displays the charm of the song; his interpretation is, perhaps, a little intense for its gossamer quality but every line shows how accomplished he had become. The line "Take me in ... cling to you" and the passage "let me feel ... will be new" are very effective. The verse maintains the standard and would, for preference, have been better placed at the start rather than between Bing's two choruses. He whistles the first sixteen bars of the second chorus without deviation from the melody but adds a few trills for embellishment. His mannerism of intruding the "n" sound before a vowel occurs in a couple of places ("n'everywhere" and "n'in"). The reprised last half of the chorus has a delightful finish with the repeat of the last line.

It was sung by Dick Powell in the film and was, of course, recorded by him; it was also recorded by Nelson Riddle.

Film: "Gold Diggers of 1933" (Warner Bros: 1933) (Ruby Keeler, Dick Powell, Joan Blondell, Ginger Rogers)

16th June 1933(Los Angeles)

(226) I'VE GOT TO SING A TORCH SONG (Al Dubin; Harry Warren) Br B 803-A
Jimmy Grier & his Orchestra

It's on with the motley with Bing as a would-be Pagliacci in another superb performance of unrequited love. A powerful verse followed by an equally compelling chorus reveal deep emotion and after the orchestra, led by Frank Schumacher (alt), plays eight bars the singer returns for a stirring final half chorus. The orchestra gives excellent support with some nice fill-in chords from Richard Ebrecke (gtr). Crosby is in wonderful voice: the more-than-adequate verse, climaxing in the last line, "I sing of love when no one hears me", has a wealth of feeling and is followed by a chorus of intense heartache. Total sincerity is represented ("it must be real") and in the final stanza, especially when reprised with its emphasis on "got" and the last two terrific lines, shows that he is quite unable to quench the ruling passion.

Warren's tune and Dubin's lyrics, based on a phrase popular in the 1930's, fit perfectly. Like the previous recording it was written for the film in which it was sung by Dick Powell. He was among those who recorded it, as were Rudy Vallee, Paul Whiteman, Fletcher Henderson and Ray Noble.

Film: "Gold Diggers of 1933" (Warner Bros: 1933) (Ruby Keeler, Dick Powell, Joan Blondell, Ginger Rogers)

(227) THERE'S A CABIN IN THE PINES (Billy Hill) Br B 804-A
Jimmy Grier & his Orchestra

A charming introduction by Richard Ebrecke (gtr) leads to his accompaniment of a verse by Crosby before the full orchestra enters to accompany a vocal chorus. A half chorus is then taken by the orchestra, with Walter Holzhaus (tpt) leading, before Bing returns to reprise the last half of the chorus. It seems that Crosby could do nothing wrong at this time and everything he touched turned to gold. The verse, nothing out of the ordinary, is made to sound indispensable and although the orchestra maintains the same tempo and adheres to the melody with good work from Ebrecke (gtr) throughout, Crosby's inherent sense of rhythm gives an underlying jazz feeling. His manner of delivering phrases with a fractional delay, his slight alteration of time values, his "to my little cabin in the pines" and the last stanza of the reprised passage all seem to betray a barely restrained desire for a more rhythmic approach.

The song proved very popular. Billy Hill, its composer, had travelled through the west and worked as a cowboy in his youth and many of his songs ("The Last Round-up", "Wagon Wheels", "The Oregon Trail", "Empty Saddles" etc) had a western flavour. It was recorded by Mildred Bailey, Johnny Mercer, Ray Noble and Al Bowlly.

Show: "On With The Show" (1933)

(228) DOWN THE OLD OX ROAD (Sam Coslow; Arthur Johnston) Br B 805-A
Jimmy Grier & his Orchestra

After a vamping introduction by the orchestra, complete with chimes, Bing's verse refers to a "famous thoroughfare" and then, in a chorus, explains that "the old Ox Road" is "any romantic spot". The orchestra plays half a chorus before he returns for a final stanza with different lyrics. Despite Crosby's very persuasive style and tone, especially resonant in the final stanza, the song means little out of the film context for which it was written. A losing battle is fought in an arrangement that loses its way down this lovers' lane. Changes of style, key and tempo, whilst acceptable in the film when almost everyone in the cast was included in the sequence, now seem to betray an uncertainty of intention.

Although the song was meant to be one of the film's big numbers it, not surprisingly, never attained the popularity of "Learn To Croon" and "Moonstruck". The tune did not catch the ear and the lyrics had little to say although in some of the lines it seemed to have been Coslow's aim to cram in as many syllables as possible, which was no help at all to a singer.

Bing recorded the song again, on 3rd May, 1954 for his autobiographical

album when he described it as "a little musical geography lesson"; it was also recorded by Maxine Sullivan and by its lyricist, Sam Coslow.

Film: "College Humor" (Paramount: 1933) (Bing Crosby, Mary Carlisle, Jack Oakie, Richard Arlen)

27th Aug 1933(Los Angeles)

(229) THANKS (Sam Coslow; Arthur Johnston) Br LA 1-A
Jimmy Grier & his Orchestra

An eight bars introduction by the orchestra is followed by a verse, piano accompanied, sung pensively until the powerful lead to the chorus. A well arranged orchestral accompaniment supports Crosby's impassioned gratitude expressed with full-throated fervour and ringing vowel tones; the orchestra plays a dance band interpretation, strictly in tune and tempo, of half the chorus and Bing reprises the second half with a most resounding "and thanks again". It is another fine performance from him with excellent phrasing even if, perhaps, the pause in "road to Paradise" is unnecessary. It may be noticed, too, that his enunciation of the word "all", pitched after the lower notes of "loved at", is an early indication of how his voice was to change with greater compass and a clearer higher register.

Coslow's happy idea of a musical sequence to Robin's "Please" met with an eventual million sale success. The lyrics, if not of the highest quality, were workmanlike and set to an attractive tune that gave Crosby every scope to show the song at its best. It proved to be the biggest hit of the film for which it was written. Bing recorded it again on 21st April, 1954 for his autobiography album and in 1960 he interpolated a few remarks in a recording of the song made by his son Phillip. It was also recorded by Lew Stone and Ray Noble (both with Al Bowlly vocals), Jack Hylton, Henry Hall, Victor Young, Will Osborne and Irving Aaronson.

Film: "Too Much Harmony" (Paramount: 1933) (Bing Crosby, Judith Allen, Jack Oakie)

(230) THE DAY YOU CAME ALONG (Sam Coslow; Arthur Johnston) Br LA 2-A
Jimmy Grier & his Orchestra

This was another unforgettable performance and one that captured the quintessence of the Crosby style. The first half of the chorus, sung with deceptive ease and restraint, the stirring middle passage and the exhilarating last stanza have all the dynamism, tonal beauty, phrasing and authority

that Crosby had by now developed into an almost new art form. The chorus is followed by a sublimely contrasting verse that from its opening, "I was a very solitary sort", is most tenderly expressed. A sixteen bars solo (possibly by Art Grier (ten)) follows the melody line with Bing whistling a subdued obbligato before he reprises the second half of the chorus with tremendous verve and a superb finish demonstrating how well he could build to a musical and narrative climax.

The song, from what was probably Coslow and Johnston's best film score, has an uplifting tune matched from the first line, "My heart went leaping", by Coslow's apt lyrics; the bridge lyrics are novel and his nautical allusions continue in the verse.

Crosby recorded the song again on 3rd May, 1954 for his autobiography album and referred to it as a "great song". Many others also recorded it including Victor Young, Will Osborne, Irving Aaronson, Leo Reisman, Lew Stone, Henry Hall and Coleman Hawkins.

Film: "Too Much Harmony" (Paramount: 1933) (Bing Crosby, Judith Allen, Jack Oakie)

(231) I GUESS IT HAD TO BE THAT WAY (Sam Coslow; Arthur Johnston) Br LA 3-A
Jimmy Grier & his Orchestra

The orchestra, with trumpet lead, introduces a chorus by Bing in which he is accompanied by only Joe Sullivan (pno) on the first two lines of the first, second and fourth stanzas. Sullivan then takes over for sixteen bars before Crosby reprises the last half chorus; the trumpet leads the orchestra in an attractive coda. After a slight fumble in the first line, on the word "divine", Crosby is in complete command and the reprised bridge passage and final stanza are particularly good. "My pretty bubble has burst" has all the power of full realisation and the next line, a wistful appreciation of fate's irony, is in marked dynamic contrast. The arrangement also provides a showcase for Joe Sullivan's style and if his touch seems a little heavy he produces some attractive chord structures.

Some discographies have, without explanation, shown this recording to have been made on 26th August but no confirmation of that date has been found; nor has any reason been discovered for it to have preceded recordings of songs that were allotted prior master numbers. It has, therefore, been shown here in its master number sequence.

The song was written for the film "Too Much Harmony" (Paramount: 1933), featuring Bing Crosby, Judith Allen and Jack Oakie, but was omitted from the released print. Nevertheless it still attained a measure of popularity, being recorded by many of the bands including that of Ted Weems.

(232) BLACK MOONLIGHT (Sam Coslow; Arthur Johnston) Br LA 4-A-B
Jimmy Grier & his Orchestra

The eight bars introduction is followed by a verse and chorus from Crosby, eight bars from the orchestra and a vocally reprised last stanza. Although this arrangement may follow the normal pattern the excellent musical arrangement and the material are very different from the usual "moonlight" song. If many of the recordings of 1933 are among the best of Crosby's career to date - if not of his entire output - then this is, arguably, the supreme achievement. After an intriguing introduction with arpeggios from plucked strings and descending chords from the saxes he sings the verse, accompanied by strings, in which at lowest ebb he "gazes at the cold river bed" and faces the inevitable. Black moonlight surrounds everything ("darkness that is endless") and is expressed so forcibly, with growling brass after "friendless, blue" and "degraded too", that it becomes not light melancholy but dark despair. The singing of the middle passage is a masterpiece of vocal expertise in its expression of doom and foreboding ("ebony moonbeams ... darken the promise of dawn") that is close to fulfilment in the last stanza. The brass section leads the orchestra through the bridge and Bing returns to repeat the last despairing surrender to fate ("I've lost all power to resist ... black moonlight") and an engulfing darkness of eternity.

The takes are similar but with some slight differences in phrasing and can be recognised in the verse and the first time that the title line is sung:

Take B: "I ask myself shall I go back"(pause after "myself") "when I seem to be" (pause after "seem")

Take A: the above lines are sung without the pauses

A pause between the title words occurs only on take A

The song was not the most popular from the excellent score of the film - its theme was too sombre - but it was easily the most original and the most imaginative. Its title, although literally a contradiction in terms, was an inspired phrase and Coslow's lyrics throughout maintain a poetic standard all too rarely achieved in popular music. A beautifully balanced verse and chorus with lines such as the opening "lost in the shuffle", the alliterative "bruised by the city, bewildered, betrayed", "I have come to the bridge, to the line that divides", "like shadows of loves that are gone", "madly I await you, even though I hate you" all have the hallmark of a true wordsmith. Johnston's tune, equally well crafted, carries the gloom of harsh fate. It is undoubtedly one of their best efforts but did not achieve the full success or recognition that it merited..

Oddly, Bing Crosby did not sing it in the film. Kitty Kelly was seen singing it but the voice was dubbed by Barbara Van Brunt: in a stage production number Miss Kelly is seen standing on a bridge over the Harlem

River contemplating suicide whilst various other characters (a police officer, a prostitute, a drunk and sundry pedestrians) pass by. Inexplicably the scene then changes to dancing chorus girls and a re-appearance of Kitty Kelly among them to reprise the song.

Crosby thought enough of the song to record it again, on 3rd May, 1954, for his autobiographical album and said, "I've wondered why some of the new boys haven't dug this song up and revived it, fellows like Cornell, Tony Bennett, Billy Eckstine, even the dreamy Neapolitano Dino Martini. It's quite moody". However, recordings of it were made by Anita O'Day and Perry Como.

Film: "Too Much Harmony" (Paramount: 1933) (Bing Crosby, Judith Allen, Jack Oakie)

27th Sep 1933(Los Angeles)

(233) BEAUTIFUL GIRL (Arthur Freed; Nacio Herb Brown) Br LA 19-A
Lennie Hayton & his Orchestra

The orchestra opens, with strings sounding a little tired, to introduce a chorus by Bing and then a verse on which he is accompanied by only Lennie Hayton (pno); after eight unremarkable bars by the orchestra he reprises the rest of the chorus. If not outstanding in any way the tune is pleasant enough and Crosby gives it full value: his "my heart cries" and the last line of the chorus are most appealing and the verse is sung with perception. The reprised chorus, sung with more vigour, commences with an improvisation as though he would like to inject a little more vitality into the proceedings but there is an immediate return to tempo and lyrics. Nevertheless the reprise could hardly be improved upon and finishes strongly.

Written for the film for which Crosby was loaned to MGM the song was lightweight but a good example of his early screen insouciance. After rising late for a recording session he sings it whilst dressing in his apartment with a small group of musicians and technician present; he also whistles a couple of lines and concludes, "I forgot the words so that will have to do". There is no whistling in the commercial recording and the song has insufficient substance outside the film context to demand much attention. The lyrics, moulded on nothing more than blatant flattery, are unoriginal but their author, Arthur Freed, resurrected the song for a film that he produced nearly twenty years later.

In "Going Hollywood" Bing played the role of "Bill Williams" and for a joke recording engineers at Brunswick sent to recording manager Jack Kapp, who was in New York, a copy of a disc with the recordings of "Beautiful Girl" and "After Sundown". It had a specially printed label

showing the singer as "Bill Williams". They told Kapp that Williams was a new discovery who would be prepared to sign a contract with Brunswick and Kapp returned to Los Angeles to find that he had been hoaxed. He was at first extremely annoyed but afterwards saw the funny side and kept the record with the false label in his personal collection until his death in 1949. It is now said to be in the possession of an American collector. It makes a good story and is reputed to be true but how could anyone, especially one so close professionally, be in any doubt that such a voice was unique?

Film: "Going Hollywood" (MGM: 1933) (Bing Crosby, Marion Davies, Lennie Hayton & his Orchestra)
Film: "Singing In The Rain" (MGM: 1952) (Gene Kelly, Donald O'Connor, Debbie Reynolds)

(234) THE LAST ROUND-UP (Billy Hill) Br LA 20-A
Lennie Hayton & his Orchestra

Strings and guitar make an effective four bars introduction to Bing heading for the last round-up. After a chorus he whistles the middle passage, accompanied by violin and guitar, and reprises the last section. Apart from one tiny flaw, an unaccountable break in the middle of the line "for the last time and ride", it is another consummate performance by him with the orchestra, riding the trail alongside, making good company. His vowel tones ("ride", "sky", "high", "along") are so rich and powerful that any other singer sounds vocally anaemic by comparison and the lines are delivered with utmost clarity and strength. The lines "so long old pal ... were dried", "where the strays ... high" and lines with the title phrase are exceptionally striking. His treatment of the bridge passage, comprising only four different words, is an ideal musical portrayal of hoofbeats and when he whistles the same passage it is no less appropriate. His repetition of the same four words at the end of the reprise makes a tremendous finish.

The song was Billy Hill's first big hit and it captured perfectly the style and character of authentic cowboy songs, using idiomatic words and phrases such as the title phrase, "Boss in the sky', "old Paint" (horse), and "dogie" (stray calf). It became so successful that its sentiment was expressed in its use at funerals of several prominent Americans. It was interpolated into the 1934 "Follies", sung by Everett Marshall and reprised with a Yiddish accent by comedian Willie Howard. Bing Crosby included a few lines of the song in his "I Positively Refuse To Sing" medley in the Paramount film and Groucho sang a few lines in the Marx Brothers film.

Among many who recorded the song were Rudy Vallee, Gene Autry,

Mills Brothers, Gene Krupa, George Olsen, Jack Hylton, Arthur Tracy, Sons Of The Pioneers and opera singer Robert Merrill.

Show: "The Ziegfeld Follies" (1934) (Willie Howard, Fanny Brice)
Film: "We're Not Dressing" (Paramount: 1934) (Bing Crosby, Carole Lombard)
Film: "Room Service" (RKO: 1938) (Marx Bros, Lucille Ball)
Film: "The Singing Hills" (Republic: 1941) (Gene Autry)
Film: "Don't Fence Me In" (Republic: 1945)

(235) AFTER SUNDOWN (Arthur Freed; Nacio Herb Brown) Br LA 21-A
Lennie Hayton & his Orchestra

Another definitive performance by Bing even if he does insist upon renaming the song, "Nafter Sundown". His vocal habit of introducing the superfluous consonant does not always offer enhancement and a clearer enunciation of the initial vowel would, in this case, have been preferable. Neither the tune nor lyric of the verse is in any way outstanding but Crosby sings it well. The chorus, however, has an attractive tango rhythm and he gives full value to both words and melody with some splendidly produced lines ("in the hush of evening", "weave their dreams around us", "listen lover, do") and the "troubadour" semi-yodelling is negotiated with ease. The orchestra provides adequate accompaniment and stentorian brass in its half-chorus before Bing reprises the second half.

This recording was coupled with that of "Beautiful Girl", recorded earlier in the day (q.v.), on the hoax disc sent to Jack Kapp. Crosby recorded the song again on 3rd May, 1954 for his autobiographical album and other recordings were made by Wayne King and Don Redman.

Film: "Going Hollywood" (MGM: 1933) (Bing Crosby, Marion Davies, Lennie Hayton & his Orchestra)

(236) HOME ON THE RANGE (Dr Brewster M Higley; Daniel E Kelley) Br LA 22-A
Lennie Hayton & his Orchestra

Other than a short orchestral introduction and an equally brief interlude between the first two verses the recording is entirely vocal. At this time Crosby could do little wrong and even if there are one or two minor blemishes on this occasion he is again in fine voice and conveys not only the literal meaning of the lyrics but their true nostalgic essence. Many of his lines possess great beauty ("Home, home on the range", "and the skies are not cloudy all day", "with the lights from the glittering stars" and others), his vowel tones are superbly produced and his artless variation of

intensity reveals an intuitive talent for dramatic expression. How effectively contrasted is the vitality of the verse "Oh, give me a land ... in a heavenly dream", accompanied by the orchestra, with that immediately following in quiet, contemplative vein, when he is accompanied only by guitar, that in turn leads to a powerful crescendo on "Home". In the face of such majesty the occasional falter or tremor passes almost unnoticed and what remains in the memory is the sheer beauty and perfection of such passages as "when the graceful white swan ... along".

Now considered to be a genuine American classic the song might well have been lost in obscurity had it not been for the efforts of John A Lomax who found it in 1908 when seeking material for his book on cowboy and frontier songs (pub. 1910). Regarded as "traditional" it became popular through arrangements by David W Guion, upon which the Crosby recording was partly based, and Oscar J Fox; only later were the identities of the composers discovered. The poem, with the title "My Western Home", had been written by Dr Higley in 1872. The wistful, basic theme of the lyrics is expressed in simple terms ornamented with well-drawn similes and wonderment ("how often at night ... glory exceeds that of ours") that lend a poetic dimension. In April of the following year he gave it to his friend Daniel E Kelley who composed the plaintive melody for it. The New York show "Prairie Echoes" was the first in which it was peformed. In 1933 President F D Roosevelt declared it to be his favourite song, which helped it to become popular, and in 1954 it was adopted by Kansas for its State song.

Countless recordings have been made of the song in versions varying from swing to symphonic; Bing Crosby also recorded it on 26th January, 1938 and 13th June, 1939 and others who have recorded it include Layton and Johnstone, Mills Brothers, Eddy Arnold, Morton Gould and opera singers Robert Merrill and John Charles Thomas.

In the film "Song Of The Islands" Jack Oakie sings a few lines of the song and Victor Mature mocks him with "Oh, poor Crosby".

Show: "Prairie Echoes"
Film: "The Awful Truth" (Columbia: 1937) (Cary Grant, Irene Dunne, Ralph Bellamy)
Film: "Song Of The Islands" (20th C-Fox: 1942) (Betty Grable, Victor Mature, Jack Oakie)
Film: "Mr Blandings Builds His Dream House" (RKO: 1948) (Cary Grant, Myrna Loy, Melvyn Douglas)
Film: "Victor, Victoria" (MGM: 1982) (Julie Andrews, Robert Preston, James Garner)

22nd Oct 1933(Los Angeles)

(237) WE'LL MAKE HAY WHILE THE SUN SHINES (Arthur Freed; Nacio Herb Brown) Br LA 68-A
Lennie Hayton & his Orchestra

Opening with notes of Ellington's "Mood Indigo" the short but interesting introduction, presaging a storm perhaps, is followed by a magnificently sung verse expressing weariness with urban existence. The lines "I'm tired of ... city days" are perfectly balanced and the second half of the verse is neatly contrived with well chosen adjectives ("riot of glaring city lights" and, particularly, "gorgeous quiet") of which Bing makes the most. The chorus extols the bucolic pleasures that await "Mr and Mrs Doakes" whatever the weather. Arthur Freed didn't neglect to mention daisies, country lanes, songbirds and a little cottage to tempt the city dwellers but if these allurements could hardly be considered original Crosby gives them the freshness of new-mown hay. The first title line is an eager anticipation and the exhilaration is breaking through in the final line of each of the next two stanzas with a hardly subdued jazz feeling as Bing alters time values to fit his mood. The orchestra takes eight bars with trumpet lead and plucked strings, probably for raindrops, before the singer returns to reprise the bridge and last stanza in an enthusiastic conclusion. Although Crosby isn't greatly helped by what is mainly a plodding accompaniment he makes the most of an average tune.

Although the song was popular at the time not much has since been heard of it although , surprisingly, a few lines of it were heard played on a record in the 1975 film. In the film for which it was written it is featured as a "daydream" sequence when Marion Davies has a vision of Bing singing it to her; it develops into a production number with a "scarecrow" chorus line and dancers, leading to a thunderstorm and a "We'll make love" concluding duet.

Film: "Going Hollywood" (MGM: 1933) (Bing Crosby, Marion Davies, Lennie Hayton & his Orchestra)
Film: "Hollywood Cowboy" (MGM: 1975) (Jeff Bridges, Alan Arkin)

(238) TEMPTATION (Arthur Freed; Nacio Herb Brown) Br LA 69-A-B
Lennie Hayton & his Orchestra

A mournful opening, changing abruptly to vamping on plucked strings, introduces a chorus by Crosby. Commencing softly, the first short stanza holds an aura of self-pity but there follows a brilliant, mounting emphasis ("you smiled, luring me on") to the genuine tone of regret in "if you were

willing, if it can never be". The rest is complete surrender to irresistible desire told in tonal qualities and phrasing of quite remarkable warmth and feeling. Lennie Hayton (pno) plays a prosaic short solo before Bing reprises the second half of the chorus with an intensity marred, perhaps, only by the glissando on the final word that seems to be alien to the sensitivity of what preceded it. Criticism that Crosby's interpretation is too dramatic misses the point that the song was used as a dramatic interlude for the film (it was an early attempt to fit a song into a movie story and was presented dramatically by Crosby whilst drinking in a bar at Tijuana). If, for the commercial recording, he had chosen to interpret the song less strikingly its effect would have been diminished. It was, in fact, very successful and has sold over a million. Even after Perry Como revived the song the original recording remained definitive.

The takes can be identified on the line "I'm just a slave, only a slave" by the distinct pause between "slave" and "only" in take B. There is also a difference in the way "pity me" is sung: in take A the second word is on a lower note than the first; in take B it is on a higher note.

The song, while not among the best, was very popular and Bing Crosby recorded the song again on 3rd March, 1945 and, for his autobiographical album, on 3rd May, 1954. It has also been recorded by Artie Shaw, Jan Garber, Henry Busse, Carmen Cavallaro, Ferde Grofe, Ted FioRito, Gordon Jenkins, Perry Como, Buddy Cole and opera singers Mario Lanza, Rise Stevens and a comedy version by Jo Stafford with Red Ingle in a burlesque hill-billy style ("Timtayshun").

Film: "Going Hollywood" (MGM: 1933) (Bing Crosby, Marion Davies, Lennie Hayton & his Orchestra)
Film: "Malaya" (MGM: 1949) (Spencer Tracy, James Stewart) (UK title: "East Of The Rising Sun")
Film: "The Bad And The Beautiful" (MGM: 1952) (Kirk Douglas, Lana Turner, Dick Powell)
Film: "Written On The Wind" (Universal:1956)(Lauren Bacall)
Film: "Kiss Them For Me" (20th C-Fox: 1957 (Cary Grant)
Film: "The Seven Hills Of Rome" (MGM: 1958) (Mario Lanza)

(239) OUR BIG LOVE SCENE (Arthur Freed; Nacio Herb Brown) Br LA 70-A
Lennie Hayton & his Orchestra

This was the last of the five Crosby recordings from the score of the film "Going Hollywood". Both verse and chorus have melodic appeal and Crosby sounds good but, unfortunately, his phrasing is careless with far too many unnecessary pauses that break the literary sense into short, disjointed groups of words (e.g., "while I sing (pause) a serenade", "faithfully

(pause) we'll learn our play") The lyrics are not strong enough to withstand a mistreatment that is too distracting which is a pity because with better handling the song could have been made much more attractive. The verse is sung better than the chorus with "when there's a moon above" and the last line well delivered. After the orchestra plays a half-chorus in a dance-band arrangement Bing returns to repeat powerfully the second half (and "n'every day").

In the film Crosby is heard singing and whistling the song on the radio with Miss Davies as an admiring listener (the whistling is omitted from the commercial recording) and he is seen and heard singing it to her in the final scene.

Other recordings of the song were made by Chick Bullock, Wayne King and Don Redman.

Film: "Going Hollywood" (MGM: 1933) (Bing Crosby, Marion Davies, Lennie Hayton & his Orchestra)

11th Dec 1933(Los Angeles)

(240) DID YOU EVER SEE A DREAM WALKING? (Mack Gordon; Harry Revel)
Lennie Hayton & his Orchestra Bru LA 89-A

A rousing introduction from descending brass chords promises more than the orchestra supplies in a bouncy up-tempo treatment of this light ballad. Although a more imaginative arrangement might have have been provided Crosby does a competent job with excellent phrasing and some good lines ("somehow is now endeared to me", the title line and the "did you ... too, too divine" stanza). In a reprised chorus he commences with slight improvisation on the first line but reverts to the melody for all but the final three lines to an abrupt finish. It seems a suitable occasion and lightweight tune for Bing to have produced one of his now famous whistling cadenzas but if the opportunity was missed sales, reaching over a million, were unaffected. In both the 1982 and 1985 films this recording was heard on the soundtrack.

The song was written for Gordon and Revel's first film score but despite, or because of, its simplicity in both lyrics and melody it became very popular, a success that rewarded the skill with which it had been crafted. It was recorded by many of the leading dance bands including Ray Noble, Henry Hall and Guy Lombardo and by Lillian Roth and Michael Holliday.

Film: "Sitting Pretty" (Paramount: 1933) (Ginger Rogers)
Film: "Pennies From Heaven" (MGM: 1982) (Steve Martin)
Film: "A Nightmare On Elm Street" (Part2) (1985)

(241) LET'S SPEND AN EVENING AT HOME (Ralph Freed;Harry Barris) Br LA 90-A-B
Lennie Hayton & his Orchestra

The strings section leads the orchestra in the introduction before Bing, accompanied by only Lennie Hayton (pno), sings a verse that exactly sets the circumstances of the oldest ploy in the world; and even if it doesn't succeed he still saves a few dollars. Based on a simple idea, neither tune nor lyrics are in any way outstanding and in one place ("and sweet music on the radio") seem ill-fitting. After Crosby's first chorus the orchestra takes a chorus which is mainly an undistinguished Hayton (pno) solo. A reprised refrain has the singer altering the final line but the last two lines of each of his choruses are particularly well delivered.

The takes are easily identified by Bing's interpolation of "My darling" before the first line of the reprised chorus on only take A. Unusually, there is an orchestral difference in the ending: after the vocal finishes on take A the orchestra plays one clear swelling chord; on take B there are four separate chords.

The song indirectly linked Bing with his "Rhythm Boys" partner, Harry Barris, who composed the tune.

1934

The result of a nationwide poll, published in February by the New York "World Telegram", placed Bing Crosby at the top of the male "popular singer" category. It was to be another very busy year for him. After his film for MGM he returned to Paramount for "We're Not Dressing"; during the year he also made "She Loves Me Not" and "Here Is My Heart" to become Paramount's biggest attraction and remain in the top ten box-office stars. On 13th July Bing and Dixie Lee became the parents of twins, Dennis Michael and Phillip Lang. During the same month "Bing Crosby Incorporated Enterprises" was formed and, extending his interests, he bought a horse-breeding ranch, the Rancho Santa Fe, north of San Diego. He also signed a new thirty-nine weeks contract for Woodbury's Soap (CBS); previous radio shows had featured his singing but under the new contract he was also to act as MC, given the right to supply the instrumental music and guest artists and handle the overall format.

His contract with Brunswick Records terminated and he signed a new recording contract with newly-formed Decca under the management of Jack Kapp who had left Brunswick. Crosby was Decca's first contracted artist and the contract was to be extended continuously until 1955.

25th Feb 1934(Los Angeles)

(242) LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR (Mack Gordon; Harry Revel) Br LA 134-A-B
Nat W Finston & his Paramount Orchestra

In his first recording of the year Crosby maintained his high standard by opening with a verse of philosophical advice (particularly well sung is "stop tootin' your horn" and the last line) and then continues to exhort with the biblical phrase. It is all "tongue-in-cheek" even outside its film context and is a good example of how easy he could make his work seem; but his manner of delivery of the title line and other phrases (e.g. "now don't think ... told me to") made him quite exceptional. The orchestra, led by the string section, takes sixteen bars that, with an interesting tempo variation, leads to Bing's return for a rhythmic reprise of the second half of the chorus in which he decides to change a word or phrase here and there.

The word changes in the reprised section appear in both takes but identification can be made at the beginning of the release in the first chorus when, on take A Bing sings "specially", and on take B "especially".

Gordon and Revel wrote a witty score for the film; this song is introduced after all the leading players are shipwrecked on an island and, whilst constructing a hut for himself after the others' refusal to work, Crosby sings it to pique Lombard. His carefree whistling is not repeated in the commercial recording. It was the hit song of the film and was so described by Bing when he re-recorded the song for his autobiographical album on 3rd May, 1954 although "May I?" must have run it very close. He had also recorded the song again on 31st December, 1947. The tune is not outstanding but the lyrics are strong both in verse and chorus with a slightly unusual rhyming pattern in places and a couple of mid-line rhymes. The BBC, however, had its own views and banned the recording when it was first issued, considering that a quotation from the scriptures was in bad taste. Nevertheless there were many other recordings made of the song including those by Lilian Roth, Raymond Paige, Henry Hall, Primo Scala and Edmundo Ros.

Film: "We're Not Dressing" (Paramount: 1934) (Bing Crosby, Carole Lombard)

(243) ONCE IN A BLUE MOON (Mack Gordon; Harry Revel) Br LA 135-A-B
Nat W Finston & his Paramount Orchestra

Not so rare as the title might suggest, the song should not be confused with two others of the same title one of which was written by Anne Caldwell and Jerome Kern for the 1923 Broadway show, "Stepping Stones", and

another that was featured in a 1959 Broadway show, "Little Mary Sunshine". Nor could the quality of the song be considered rare although, as the romantic ballad of the film for which it was written, it served its purpose adequately as Crosby sings it to Carole Lombard on a desert island after they are shipwrecked. For the commercial recording he is in his usual excellent voice with some well delivered lines and vowel tones and gives an enjoyable performance if the one or two phrasing gaffes are ignored. The middle passage is very good indeed with the flowing "Oh will you ... be mine" outstanding. The line "now are sharing a dream so divine" would have been equally as good were it not for the needless pause midway through. After a chorus by Bing, with the orchestra offering "soul" music support through the bridge, he hums and "la-di-de's" to the orchestra's sixteen bars before he reprises the second half of the song when, for no apparent reason, he changes the line "here am I, here are you" to "here are you, here am I", an alteration that occurs in both takes.

Although they are very similar the takes do have a couple of easily detected differences: on take A Bing sings "we were worlds apart" and on take B, "we are worlds apart"; in the second chorus the phrase "a beautiful song" is "da-di-da'd" on take A and hummed on take B.

The song had some popularity with the dance bands, being recorded by several of them including those of Raymond Paige and Benny Kreuger.

Film: "We're Not Dressing" (Paramount: 1934) (Bing Crosby, Carole Lombard)

(244) GOODNIGHT, LOVELY LITTLE LADY (Mack Gordon; Harry Revel) Br LA 136-A-B
Nat W Finston & his Paramount Orchestra

There is a charming orchestral introduction with chimes and violin that continue into a short but attractive verse by Crosby. The first half of the chorus is sung tenderly in the language of lovers with more intense feeling displayed in the second half. The orchestra takes over for half a chorus with short solos from clarinet and saxophone and Bing reprises what remains. He gives a good, thoughtful rendering and builds to a most effective climax in the reprise with a substitution of "sleep tight" for "goodnight" and an additional line that, with accompanying plucked strings, form an ideal vocal coda. The last line of the verse and the lines "on a pillow ... of dreams" are appealing and his last "farewell" very firm.

There are a number of phrasing differences in the takes: in take B there are distinct pauses after "to leave", "are gone" and "meet again" that are not evident in take A; the first three syllables of "on a pillow" are sung on the same note in take A and in ascending order in take B.

The song, whilst not so melodic as "Goodnight Sweetheart", expresses the same sentiments of parting and is a pretty enough tune. The rather ordinary lyrics are enhanced by a neat rhyming pattern. In the film the song was a "throw away", not treated as the romantic song that it is but used to pacify a pet bear, "Droopy". In a recurring gag the animal, tolerating only this song, attacks and pins down anyone it hears singing any other. The only time that Bing is able to sing it right through is in a comedy scene when, after a shipwreck, he is floating in the sea in a barrel with the bear towing him. That a love song survived this harsh treatment says much for it.

The song was popularly received and among those who recorded it were Roy Fox (with Denny Dennis vocal), Benny Kreuger and Primo Scala.

Film: "We're Not Dressing" (Paramount: 1934) (Bing Crosby, Carole Lombard)

(245) MAY I? (Mack Gordon; Harry Revel) Br LA 137-A-B
Nat W Finston & his Paramount Orchestra

Bing Crosby referred to this song as "a plaintive little appeal" but his treatment of it is nothing less than an encapsulation of his deceptively easy up-tempo style and expertise ; an example of how he could take a well crafted piece and transform it into compelling, popular art. A deliberately understated verse explains his dilemma, ending with a confident "I'd sing to her". His first chorus, beautifully controlled and phrased, is the "plaintive little appeal" with the short bridge passage perfectly contrasted. The exuberantly reprised chorus is a joy throughout with interpolated phrases, extemporisations, inventive expression (how eloquent are the pauses after "fate" and between "say" and "I do"), word inflections ("really", "kind", "you"), all aided and abetted by background jazz trumpet phrases. The abundant talent was so natural it was little wonder that everyone mistakenly thought the accomplishment would be easy to emulate.

There are a few minor differences in the takes: "give me a chance" and "a love affair" in take A become "give me my chance" and "that love affair" in take B; the interpolated "Oh" at the start of the second chorus is omitted from take B.

Gordon and Revel wrote a good, light-hearted song that Crosby chose to record again, on 3rd May 1954, for his autobiographical album. Others to record it included Tommy Dorsey, Eddy Duchin and Michael Holliday.

In the film Bing sang it a couple of times, first to Lombard and her idle-rich friends on board a luxury yacht (the first few lines are accompanied by his strumming a ukulele) and again whilst fishing from a rock in the sea.

Film: "We're Not Dressing" (Paramount: 1934) (Bing Crosby, Carole Lombard)

10th Mar 1934(Los Angeles)

(246) LITTLE DUTCH MILL (Ralph Freed; Harry Barris) Br LA 144-A-B
Jimmy Grier & his Orchestra

The orchestral introduction sounds, intentionally or not, like barges on a Dutch canal and, unfortunately, the whimsey doesn't end there. Although the tune is bright and Crosby sings with his usual elan the insipid lyrics and elementary rhymes hold no interest. It is trivia, possibly escaped from a Pantomine, that no-one would wish to pursue and it may be concluded that Bing recorded it as a favour to his old friend who composed the melody. After a vocal verse and chorus, supported by an excellent orchestral arrangement, James Briggs (clt) provides a sixteen bars solo backed by brass section chords and Bing reprises the second half of the song with some variations of lyrics and melody.

The takes differ in the second chorus when Bing sings:

Take A: "was a real Dutch treat" and "little Dutch boy and the little Dutch girl"

Take B: "was just a real Dutch treat" and "the Dutch boy and the Dutch girl"

(247) SHADOWS OF LOVE (Alvin Kaufman, Mildred Kaufman and Mickey Kippel)
Jimmy Grier & his Orchestra Br LA 145-A-B

This is a curiously uneven recording. Crosby sings well enough and the orchestral arrangement is excellent but the message and gloom of the lyrics are rarely evident at the tempo at which the song is taken. The melody, except for the release, trips along with little suggestion of despondency and when the orchestra takes over after a vocal verse and chorus it becomes almost a sixteen bars romp. It is a pity that the words and music were mismatched: improved lyrics and a more melodic middle passage to give the tune a required lift would have brought benefits. The composers, about whom nothing seems to be known, bring in the literary metaphors thick and fast ranging from "a little blackbird has made my poor heart ache" to "made my bed, that's where I lie", by way of "bitter pill", "clouds hard to shake", "heart like a stone" and several others. The title phrase occurred in the magnificent "Black Moonlight" but there the resemblance ends.

The takes show some vocal variations and, in the orchestral section, the guitar is more prominent in take B:

Take A: "a little blackbird"; Take B: "that little blackbird"
Take A: "the stone"; Take B: "a stone"
Take A: "always living"; Take B: "living"("always" omitted)

13th Mar 1934(Los Angeles)

(248) SHE REMINDS ME OF YOU (Mack Gordon; Harry Revel) Br LA 146-A-B
Jimmy Grier & his Orchestra

This was the last of the recordings of songs from the film and perhaps the most under-rated. There is throughout an inherent jazz feeling that seemed to come so naturally to Bing Crosby: it is a gently swinging light-hearted version of a delicious trifle. A well sung verse, especially the two middle lines, precedes a chorus in which the clever rhyming pattern is given is given full emphasis. (While three stanzas have abundant rhymes the middle passage, in contrast, has only "denied" and "satisfied"). The first half of the final chorus is a diverting arrangement in which the lines are taken in turn by trombone, muted trumpet and Crosby who then reprises the second half with blithe improvisations to a positive conclusion.

The last line of the first chorus and the penultimate line of the reprise are sung differently in the takes which can easily be recognised in the second chorus when, on take A, Bing sings "head over heels in love" and omits the last two words on take B; "Oh, she sighs like you" on take A has the first word omitted on take B.

In the film, pet bear "Droopy" can tolerate no song other than "Goodnight, Lovely Little Lady" (see 244) but whilst brushing the animal Crosby is allowed, inexplicably, to sing "She Reminds Me Of You" right through before being thrown to the deck. The song was, of course, cleverly devised by Mack Gordon to flatter both "Droopy" and Carole Lombard with a measure of subtlety in its use.

Film: "We're Not Dressing" (Paramount: 1934) (Bing Crosby, Carole Lombard)

(249) RIDIN' AROUND IN THE RAIN (Gene Austin, Carmen Lombardo) Br LA 147-A-B
Jimmy Grier & his Orchestra

To follow the advice proffered in this song may be neither practical nor successful but Crosby is very persuasive. That any discriminate young

lady would prefer a drenching to a penthouse is hard to credit but he insists, "Oh, how they weaken in the rain". However, one doesn't have to believe the nonsense to enjoy it for Bing gives a great performance including a second chorus that swings with such joyous abandon as he gloats in "the ra-a-ain" that no-one could possibly care about the weather. The orchestra, too, plays its part with a fine arrangement that includes "whizzers" in the introduction and in the short interlude between Crosby's chorus and verse. The orchestral chorus is well varied with all the instruments happily engaged and individually audible. This will cheer you up on a wet day.

There are many differences in the takes both in words and phrasing but the following examples from the second vocal chorus will suffice to determine the take:

Take A: "catching happiness"; "I asked for a kiss"
Take B: "found happiness"; "and I asked for a kiss"

Gene Austin, one of the composers of the song, was a very popular artist of the 1920's and early 1930's who recorded prolifically. His recording of "My Blue Heaven", the song that became his signature tune, sold in millions and remained the top seller until overtaken by Crosby's "White Christmas" fifteen years later. Austin recorded "Ridin' Around In The Rain" and other recordings of the song were made by Guy Mitchell, Isham Jones, Vincent Lopez, and Glen Gray.

5th July 1934(Los Angeles)

This was Bing Crosby's final recording session for Brunswick before commencing his Decca contract and rejoining recording manager Jack Kapp. Three of the four songs recorded were from his latest Paramount film "She Loves Me Not".

(250) I'M HUMMIN', I'M WHISTLIN', I'M SINGIN' (Mack Gordon; Harry Revel)
Irving Aaronson & his Orchestra Br LA 181-A-B

This was one of the songs written for Crosby to sing in the film and Gordon and Revel could never have found anyone better able to perform the title requirements with, additionally, a little scat thrown in. It is a light-hearted trifle that Bing whips into a delicious savoury. The last two lines of the verse are delightfully contrasted ("low" and "high") and other lines (e.g. "looking at that lovely moon", "underneath ... for two") have particular appeal. If the song does have more froth than substance nothing can detract from the treatment it receives and in the geniality that abounds it may seem churlish to point out that "glistening" is no rhyme for "whistling".

Any shortcomings are forgiven in the cheerfulness of Crosby's last line anticipation. There is strong orchestral support and when the band takes sixteen bars the brass and saxophone sections alternate in staccato arrangement before Bing scats the first line of a jubilant reprise. It is now noticeable that his delivery has become smoother but the "n" consonant preceding vowels still occurs in several places.

There are a few differences in the takes, including:

Take A: "I'm nervous and I'm restless and fidgety"
Take B: "I'm nervous, I'm restless and I'm fidgety"

and, in the reprise,

Take A: "Oh why am I whistling"
Take B: "If you wonder why I'm whistling"

Film: "She Loves Me Not" (Paramount: 1934) (Bing Crosby, Miriam Hopkins, Kitty Carlisle)

(251) LOVE IN BLOOM (Leo Robin; Ralph Rainger) Br LA 182-A-B
Irving Aaronson & his Orchestra

This is very different from the buoyant song that preceded it and Crosby again demonstrates his remarkable versatility in a tender interpretation. A pretty introduction, with the orchestra led by violin, leads to a short but equally tuneful verse by Bing. The line "My heart ... ecstasy" sounds very good but without the unnecessary pause after the second word it would have been even better. The chorus is very melodious, with a short but most tuneful saxophone link between the second stanza and the release. Bing renders the lyrics with the utmost sincerity. The vehemence of his denials ("oh no"), the strength of his feeling ("You know it isn't a dream") and other lines ("can it be ... to bring"; "is it all ... joy supreme") are vividly expressed. The orchestra plays its full part but the rhythm section plods behind the brass during its half chorus. Crosby returns to reprise the last half of the chorus and ends with his "catch in the voice" on the last word. The attraction, or otherwise, of his "fulfilment" is a matter of choice but the final syllable might well have been left as the composer wrote it. This might also be said of the beginning of the first, second and fourth stanzas when, instead of starting on the low note as written, Bing sings the lines on a higher note. This may have resulted from the way the song was featured in the film when, in a duet with trained soprano Kitty Carlisle, she took the correct lower notes and he the descant.

The takes can be identified by different phrasing: "this is the flower" is sung differently but the easiest comparison is the first line, "Blue night and you". On take A "and" is sung on a lower note than "you"; on take B it is sung on a higher note.

This "Oscar" nominated song (it lost to "The Continental") was Robin and Rainger's only contribution to the Crosby film but it was the best one of the score. In an article written in 1936 Carl Brisson was reported as saying that both he and Bing Crosby wanted the song for a film and that they had tossed a coin for it. Bing, apparently, had won the toss but in an interview many years later, in August 1961, Crosby said that he had tried to avoid singing the song in his film as he thought it would be unsuccessful. On another occasion he said that he had thought it to be too poetic and too difficult to sing. Leo Robin, however, said that it was thanks to Bing that the song achieved its huge success and that he and Rainger could always take a chance with Bing who "could put over anything, low-down or fancy". Unfortunately, the song could never be taken as soberly as it deserved after it fell into the hands of comedian Jack Benny who used it as his theme music and, as part of his act, regularly mangled it on his violin. Nevertheless it was a fine tune to which Robin, with his usual flair had written lyrics with fine poetic imagery.

Bing Crosby recorded the song again, for his autobiographical album, on 3rd May 1954, referring to it as "a solid song that had survived countless assaults from Jack Benny". Many of the bands also recorded it including those of Hal Kemp, Claude Hopkins and Jack Payne and, in a comedy version, Spike Jones.

In the film "Duffy's Tavern" Bing is heard singing part of the song on a phonograph.

Film: "She Loves Me Not" (Paramount: 1934) (Bing Crosby, Miriam Hopkins, Kitty Carlisle)
Film: "Duffy's Tavern" (Paramount: 1934) (Ed Gardner and all star cast)

(252) STRAIGHT FROM THE SHOULDER (Mack Gordon; Harry Revel) Br LA 183-A-B
Irving Aaronson & his Orchestra

A vamping introduction by the orchestra leads to a magnificent opening crescendo vowel by Crosby and his complete mastery of this light ballad. It is all expertly phrased, rich in tone and colour and sung throughout with ease and conviction. After a verse and chorus by the singer, including an all too short saxophone obbligato, the orchestra plays a competent, if ordinary, sixteen bars before Bing reprises the last two stanzas with a little improvisation and a powerful delivery of the last two lines.

The takes are very similar but in the reprised section Bing sings "let 'em all laugh" on take A and "let them all laugh" on take B.

Although it can justly be said that Crosby made the most of what is an unexceptional song with a melody that is unremarkable the lyrics bear

some examination. Mack Gordon put to good use the problem that besets all writers and turned to advantage the use of cliches. It might be inferred that with the use of an awkward, even daunting, example for the title and the further anatomical illustration that followed he decided to put his best foot forward, strike while the iron was hot and join the "hackneyed phrase" brigade. Gordon, however, knew what he was doing when he eschewed "eloquent phrases" and "grand repartee" and chose words that are "simple and not very smart". It is, in fact, cleverly contrived and Crosby's interpretation, though earnest enough, is an appropriate light, attractive declaration.

It was not the most popular of the songs from the film, in which it was sung as a duet by Crosby and Kitty Carlisle both straight and in parody, but it achieved a measure of success with the bands; among those who recorded it were Hal Kemp and Lew Stone (with an Al Bowlly vocal).

Film: "She Loves Me Not" (Paramount: 1934) (Bing Crosby, Miriam Hopkins, Kitty Carlisle)

(253) GIVE ME A HEART TO SING TO (Ned Washington-Maxson Judell; Victor Young) Br LA 184-A-B
Irving Aaronson & his Orchestra

Bing Crosby did say, too modestly perhaps, that he wasn't a good judge of new material but if he himself chose to record this song then it does to some extent bear out his remark. It is dross that not even the best vocal alchemist in the business could turn to gold. Young's tune was not among his best and the lyrics are sheer drivel; little wonder then that Crosby is unconvincing. The only interest is that the recording was the last one that he made for Brunswick; considering that he had made so many fine ones for them it is a pity that higher quality material could not have been chosen for this occasion. Bing, in the usual format, sings a verse and chorus that are followed by half a chorus from the orchestra in which featured trombone (probably Red Jessup) and the brass section alternate before the singer reprises the second half.

The takes vary at the beginning and end: in the verse on take A Bing sings "it cries for" and in take B the word "it" is omitted; the last two words, "to me", are sung on the same note in take A and rising notes in take B. "Take C" was shown on the labels of some issues but it proved to be a dubbing of take A.

Show: "Frankie And Johnnie"

8th Aug 1934(Los Angeles)

This was the first recording session of Bing Crosby under his contract with Decca. His reunion with Jack Kapp brought an immediate start, with three old ballads and a jazz number, to Kapp's policy of diversifying the material and widening the Crosby repertoire.

(254) I LOVE YOU TRULY (Carrie Jacobs Bond) De DLA 6-A-B
Georgie Stoll & his Orchestra

Harp chords briefly introduce the first verse by Bing which is followed by a verse from the orchestra with solos by clarinet and trombone (possibly Georgie Stoll); Crosby takes a second verse and the harp concludes the recording. The singer is in good voice and offers immense feeling in the first verse but sounds less comfortable at the start of the second, particularly on the rather awkward line "just by your side to stand" but the remainder of the verse is excellent with a most effective final title line.

The takes can be identified in the second verse when Bing sings "by your side" on take A and adds "just" on take B ("just by your side").

Crosby recorded the song, so full of warmth and sympathy, on two later occasions, 18th April 1945 and 3rd May 1954, and it has been recorded by innumerable other artists including Ray Noble and Lew Stone (both with an Al Bowlly vocal), Allan Jones, Arthur Tracy, Glen Gray, Wayne King and, as a duet, Jo Stafford and Nelson Eddy.

Carrie Jacobs Bond wrote only a few songs but three of them are regarded as being masterpieces of the early century sentimental ballad. This song, written in 1906, and the next one to be recorded by Bing Crosby were two of them; the third, "A Perfect Day", he recorded on 13th December, 1950.

Film: "I Married A Witch" (Un Artists: 1942)(Fredric March, Veronica Lake, Susan Hayward)

(255) JUST A-WEARYIN' FOR YOU (Frank Stanton; Carrie Jacobs Bond) De DLA 7-A-B
Georgie Stoll & his Orchestra

A lengthy introduction concluding with harp chords leads to Bing's first verse sung with intense emotion especially on the line "Restless, I don't know what to do". It seems almost sacrilegious to suggest that the reedy note that follows ("just") sounds suspiciously like the one that was gifted to Durante for his "Inka Dinka Doo" ("and was he glad to get rid of it"). A sensitive violin solo occupies a verse and there is a short concert-

like arrangement in an interlude for brass, piano and strings before Crosby returns for his second verse, sung beautifully and with a depth of sorrow in the line "but there's sadness in the notes".

In take A, second verse, Bing sings "seem to feel your absence"; in take B he sings "they seem to feel your absence".

The song, written in 1901, conveys an aura of forlorn unhappiness and Bing catches the mood perfectly. It will, however, forever be associated with Paul Robeson whose recording of it proved immensely popular. Crosby recorded it again on 18th April, 1945.

(256) LET ME CALL YOU SWEETHEART (Beth Slater Whitson; Leo Friedman) De DLA 8-A
Georgie Stoll & his Orchestra

This perennial waltz favourite is given superb treatment by both singer and orchestra in the true spirit in which it was written. Composed within a limited range and with simple lyrics it has for long been the most popular of community songs and, incidentally, suffered mangling and mayhem at many a drunken party; in this recording it is restored to all its original beauty. Unashamedly sentimental it expresses a true feeling that Crosby interprets with beautiful tone and inflection without unnecessary vocal ornamentation. A second chorus is taken by the orchestra with trumpet and violin solos, both supported by Joe Sullivan (pno). Bing then whistles half a chorus with elegant melody variations and reprises the last half chorus. It is again noticeable that the Crosby voice is decidely smoother and more resonant than in his earlier recordings.

This delightful song, written in 1910, was recorded again by Bing Crosby on 17th July, 1944 and by many other artists in a variety of styles as diverse as those of Mills Brothers, Pat and Shirley Boone, Vaughn Monroe, Halfway House Orchestra and Denny Dennis. It has also appeared in several films, usually to evoke period or style; in the 1938 film it was sung by Oliver Hardy and in "Thousands Cheer" Gene Kelly sang a couple of lines.

Film: "Swiss Miss" (Hal Roach: 1938) (Laurel and Hardy)
Film: "Thousands Cheer" (MGM: 1943) (Gene Kelly, Katherine Grayson)
Film: "Diamond Horseshoe" (20th C-Fox: 1945) (Betty Grable, Dick Haymes)
Film: "For The Love Of Mary" (Universal: 1948) (Deanna Durbin, Jeffrey Lynn)

(257) SOMEDAY, SWEETHEART (John Spikes, Benjamin Spikes) De DLA 9-A
Georgie Stoll & his Orchestra

This, the last recording of the initial Decca session, is in marked contrast to the three that preceded it for here we have a jazz number of high quality. Immediately after introductory bars from Joe Sullivan (pno) Crosby is in a rhythmic element harking back to Whiteman days. As he phrases his reproaches Sullivan's piano gives him splendid support. Trumpet and clarinet solos are included in the swinging orchestral chorus that follows and after a short passage from piano and guitar Bing reprises the chorus. The manner in which he fashions the melody, the lyrics and the phrasing is a perfect example of what made him unique. The orchestral backing with Sullivan (pno), guitar and violin to the fore is outstanding. The vocal coda contrived by Crosby, in which he has inspired support from a guitar reminiscent of the great Eddie Lang, is a masterstroke.

The song, written in 1919, is a favourite of every jazz musician and singer and the list of people who recorded it is almost endless. Some of them were Jelly Roll Morton, King Oliver, Red Nichols, Woody Herman, Count Basie, Muggsy Spanier, Ted Lewis, Artie Shaw, Benny Goodman, Joe Venuti - Eddie Lang, Eddie Condon, Jack Teagarden, Freddy Gardner, Mildred Bailey, Dick Todd and Dinah Shore.

5th Oct 1934(Los Angeles)

(258) THE MOON WAS YELLOW (Edgar Leslie; Fred E Ahlert) De DLA 64-A
Georgie Stoll & his Orchestra

A Latin-American number in tango rhythm it hardly contains that "vocal inspiration" that is mentioned. The tune is a good one of its kind and Bing follows the melody throughout but does nothing imaginative with lyrics that have a nice rhyming pattern but are, in places, rather forced. His pauses appear, presumably because of the rhythm employed, where the music demands regardless of the meaning of the words. It is interesting, however, to hear his projection of the vowel sound in "moon", an effect that was to become more pronounced and an attractive feature of some later recordings.

The song became popular and was recorded by several artists including Jane Morgan, Les Brown, Dorsey Brothers, Eddie Heywood, Buddy Cole, Ray Martin and Frances Langford.

(259) THE VERY THOUGHT OF YOU (Ray Noble) De DLA 65-A-B
Georgie Stoll & his Orchestra

Bing Crosby sings a chorus and reprises the second half; between the vocals the orchestra, in an unexceptionable arrangement, plays a short bridge passage and the first half of the chorus in which the piano solos, uninventively, the first eight bars. Crosby takes it all in his stride but his literary phrasing is again suspect at times although he delivers some good lines ("to me that's everything" and the last line of the reprise). The powerful high note on "above", while sounding good, lacks subtlety.

The takes can be distinguished by a change of word:

Take A: "Those little ordinary things"
Take B: "The little ordinary things"

The lovely tune of Ray Noble's was another winner for him and, unusually, he also wrote the lyrics. Written in 1932 it became his opening theme tune and he closed with another of his great hits, "Goodnight Sweetheart". The song was one of the most popular with dance bands and nearly all of them, including the composer's (with an Al Bowlly vocal), recorded it. Bowlly also recorded it as a solo artist and others were Billie Holiday, Kitty Carlisle, Doris Day, Andy Williams, Charlie Kunz, Liberace and Carmen Cavallaro.

In the film "Cabo Blanco" it is heard on the soundtrack sung by Nat "King" Cole.

Film: "Young Man With A Horn" (Warner Bros: 1950) (Kirk Douglas, Doris Day, Hoagy Carmichael) (Based loosely upon the life of Bix Beiderbecke) (UK title: "Young Man Of Music")
Film: "Hell On 'Frisco Bay" (Warner Bros: 1956) (Alan Ladd, Edward G Robinson)
Film: "Cabo Blanco" (1979) (Charles Bronson, Jason Robards)

(260) TWO CIGARETTES IN THE DARK (Paul Francis Webster; Lew Pollack)
Georgie Stoll & his Orchestra De DLA 66-A-C

This is virtually a replay of "Shadows On The Window"; cigarettes may replace shadows but the clandestine meeting and silhouettes remain the same. There is, however, a change in Crosby's voice which now has a tendency to tighten up on the higher notes with little inclination for the open-throated bravura style that had made him so popular; his "traces", "regrets" and the last line "cigarettes" are thin substitutes. He sings a chorus, with sterling work from guitar, followed by a half chorus from the orchestra with first the sax section and then violin to the fore before he reprises the second half of the chorus.

In the first chorus on take A Bing sings the words "stumbled in" on three different notes but on take C he sings them on the same note.

The song became very popular and those who recorded it included Morton Downey, Jack Fulton, Layton and Johnstone, Skitch Henderson, Glen Gray, Billy Cotton, Jack Jackson and Lew Stone.

Film: "Kill That Story"

(261) THE SWEETHEART WALTZ (Milton Drake, Walter Kent, Carmen Lombardo)
Georgie Stoll & his Orchestra De DLA 67-B-C

This is a rather ordinary song which is sung indifferently by Crosby. Neither the banal lyrics nor the tune (a sweet waltz entirely suitable for the recording that was made by the orchestra led by the composer's brother, Guy) do anything to inspire a notable performance from Bing. Of course, the voice is there but with some of his recently developed "thin" higher notes and some dreadful pauses - even between the two syllables of "sweetheart" in a couple of places - it cannot be regarded as among his better efforts. He sings a verse and chorus, the orchestra plays a half chorus featuring a violin solo and Bing reprises the last half of the chorus.

There are a few differences in phrasing in the takes including:

In take B both syllables of "Lovers" are sung on same note; in take C the first syllable is sung on a higher note. The phrase "will make it come true" has no pause in take A; there is a pause between "it" and "come" in take C.

9th Nov 1934(Los Angeles)

((262) WITH EVERY BREATH I TAKE (Leo Robin; Ralph Rainger) De DLA 70-A-B
Georgie Stoll and his Orchestra

With a good lilting arrangement from the Stoll orchestra and another excellent song from Robin and Rainger, Bing is back to form. A happy tune and well-fitted lyrics, for Leo Robin's imagination was always fertile, provide him with material in which his pleasure is so evident. He sings two choruses, separated by an eight bars orchestral passage, in both of which he delivers some particularly good lines (e.g. "But a sign ... for you"; "I'll remember ... years through"; "love seems ... someday"), with delightful variations of melody line and lyrics in the second. Even the two "head" notes, on "awake" and "mine" seem well controlled and offer true dynamic contrast.

The takes are similar but can be identified near the end of the second chorus when on take A Bing sings "then every breath I take" and on take B he omits the word "then".

This was one of three great songs that Robin (two with Rainger and one with Lewis E Gensler) wrote for Crosby to sing in the film and he sang it again in a two reel colour film made the following year when he was introduced by Mary Pickford at the microphone in the famous Cocoanut Grove of the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles. (After some patter with her and Johnny Mack Brown she introduces him as "Mr Rudy Vallee - oh, I'm sorry, Mr Bing Crosby"). He also, on that occasion included whistling but there is none on the commercial recording.

A series of 78 rpm records were issued as "Voice Of The Stars" (Jubilee Edition) on behalf of the Cinematograph Trade Benevolent Fund which comprised very short extracts from the soundtracks of many films. The second record, VS2 (OEA 1652) included a brief excerpt from "Here Is My Heart" with Bing, accompanied only by piano, singing the last stanza of "With Every Breath I Take". The exact date that this soundtrack recording was made cannot be confirmed but is considered to be about October or November, 1934.

Others to record the song were Harry Richman, Guy Lombardo, Connie Boswell, Ted FioRito, Frank Sinatra and Billy Eckstine.

Film: "Here Is My Heart" (Paramount: 1934) (Bing Crosby, Kitty Carlisle)
Film: "Star Night At The Cocoanut Grove" (MGM: 1935) (Leo Carillo and "A Galaxy Of Screen Stars")

(263) JUNE IN JANUARY (Leo Robin; Ralph Rainger) De DLA 71-A-B
Georgie Stoll & his Orchestra

This is the second of the songs from the film "Here Is My Heart"; it proved to be the most popular and became one of Bing's greatest successes. From the first line Robin's original lyrics are given perfect treatment as the two months of the title are sharply contrasted in a verse elegantly phrased and expressed. The chorus that follows is equally good and after a half chorus taken by the orchestra, with an insistent brass emphasis, Crosby returns to reprise the bridge and final stanza. It is not easy to select lines of particular merit for the performance is virtually flawless but his "moon" is very effective and the line beginning "winds of January", with the onomatopoeic "moan" is outstanding; all the reprised half chorus is superior popular art. There are, too, some excellent examples of how Crosby could caress vowel tones to endow them with a wealth of feeling. The record became a million-seller.

The takes show variations in phrasing but the following instances clearly define A and B:

In the first chorus on take A Bing sings the words "bare" and "only" with the "catch" or "cry" in the voice that Dr Mize described as a "tilt". On take B both words are sung straight. The penultimate word of the recording, "with" is protracted on take A but not held on Take B.

Leo Robin told how the song came to be written: Rainger had written a "little jingle tune, a kind of bouncy schottisch", for which Robin produced the "June In January" title. Rainger, however, thought that his tune was unsuitable for such a title and wrote an entirely different melody, the one that became world famous and ideal for the lyrics. Bing had a high regard for the composers and appreciated their good taste and musicianship. He recorded the song again on two other occasions, on 3rd May, 1954 for his autobiographical album and on 12th September, 1977. Among many others who recorded it were Harry Richman, James Melton, Ted FioRito, Guy Lombardo, Roy Fox (vocal by Denny Dennis), Jo Stafford and Dean Martin.

In the film "The Joker Is Wild" Crosby is heard singing the song, accompanied by Buddy Cole (pno), whilst a silhouette, purporting to be his, is shown in shadow on a screen.

Film: "Here Is My Heart" (Paramount: 1934) (Bing Crosby, Kitty Carlisle)
Film: "The Joker Is Wild" (Paramount: 1957) (Frank Sinatra, Jeanne Crain, Mitzi Gaynor) (Based on the life story of comedian Joe E Lewis)

(264) LOVE IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER (Leo Robin; Lewis E Gensler) De DLA 72-A-B
Georgie Stoll & his Orchestra

From its bright, bouncy introduction this up-tempo number, used to balance the two romantic ballads of the film in which it was featured, is a winner all the way. Bing recorded the song for a second time on 3rd May, 1954 for his autobiographical album and described it as " a pretty good jump tune". Truly in this first recording he and the band make it leap with joy, a merry caper in which everyone has fun. Gensler's swinging melody, Robin's witty lyrics, a sparkling orchestral arrangement and an incomparable Crosby performance make an exciting combination. Bing's penchant for jazz phrasing is evident throughout: after a frolicsome verse and chorus which include some outstanding lines (e.g. the last line of the verse, "and I couldn't be forlorner" and the whole middle passage) the orchestra takes a chorus that features improvised solos from muted trumpet (16 bars) and saxophone (8 bars) before a four bars piano break (probably Joe Sullivan)

re-introduces Bing for another first-rate chorus. He sings the first stanza, whistles the second, sings an entirely re-written bridge and reprises the final stanza.

The lyrics come to Crosby so effortlessly that it seems he is ad-libbing them. Did Robin actually write "cop a look at that moon"? It sounds far more like Crosby adding his own idiomatic touch and the words are certainly not in the writer's normal poetic style. Both versions of the bridge lyrics are clever, concise, funny and well rhymed and when, abruptly, the recording ends any listener would be left wishing that there had been more.

The takes differ in a few places and are readily distinguishable. In the verse on take A Bing sings "but can't you see" but omits the first word on take B; when he starts his second chorus he adds "oh" before the title phrase on take A but not on take B. An interesting variation is the manner in which he sings the line "and I couldn't be forlorner"; take A has the emphasis on the second word and take B, sung with studied indifference, stresses "couldn't" which fully accords with the sentiments expressed in the revised bridge lyrics.

The song, which became an enormous success, was written when Gensler suggested to Robin that they should collaborate. Robin gave him the title and Gensler composed the melody after which the lyricist added the words. It was recorded by many artists and jazz and dance bands, but Crosby's version remained definitive. Eddie Condon, Dorsey Brothers, Benny Goodman Sextet, Wingy Manone, Michael Holliday, Frank Sinatra and Johnny Mercer all recorded their versions and Bing's son, Gary, also recorded it.

Film: "Here Is My Heart" (Paramount: 1934) (Bing Crosby, Kitty Carlisle)
Film: "Millions In The Air" (Paramount: 1935) (Robert Cummings)
Film: "The Valachi Papers" (1972) (Charles Bronson, Joseph Wiseman)

(265) MAYBE I'M WRONG AGAIN (Jo Trent, Jack Bennett) De DLA 73-A-B
Georgie Stoll & his Orchestra

Bing sings two straight choruses in tones of extreme beauty and makes the most of a good tune with adequate lyrics. He clearly portrays all the apprehension and doubt that follows previous disappointment. Many of the lines are stunningly projected and forcefully expressed. He engages in no departure from the melody but his lachrymal style is all-sufficient. It is a consistent rendition in powerful voice and not until the last line does he introduce the thin higher note to which he had recourse in some of his

recent recordings. Between the vocal choruses the orchestra plays sixteen bars the last eight of which feature a piano solo of single notes.

The takes are similar but in his second chorus Bing sings "I'll still have the thrill" on take A and "I'll still have that thrill" on take B.

The song was popular with dance bands and was recorded by several of them (in the UK by Roy Fox, with vocal by Denny Dennis, and Lew Stone) but waned in public favour.

December, 1934

We leave 1934 with something of a mystery that is not now likely to be solved. It has been alleged that during December of that year Bing Crosby, with his friend Jimmy Demaret the golf professional, visited San Francisco for a golf tournament and whilst there went to the George Sollie and C P MacGregor Recording Laboratory where, accompanied only by piano and drums, he recorded the following nine songs:

Ole Faithful
Blame It On My Youth
Lullaby Of Broadway
Clouds
Down By The River
In The Valley Of The Moon
With My Eyes Wide Open I'm Dreaming
By A Waterfall
Orchids In The Moonlight

It has been stated that these recordings were made because Crosby had over-stayed his time in San Francisco causing him to be behind schedule with his radio shows and that he was providing them for broadcasts. To this end, it was claimed, the recordings (or some of them) were sent to Los Angeles where accompaniment by Georgie Stoll and his Orchestra was overdubbed. Bing, it was said, was so impressed with the results of a technique then its infancy that he arranged, through Decca, for special copies of some of the recordings (the first five above and possibly others) to be pressed by the Allied Phonograph Recording Manufacturing Company, Hollywood in their "B Master" series. As these were not commercial recordings they would have been outside the scope of this book were it not for the fact that in January, 1975 the first three of the songs and a few lines of "Clouds" appeared on a commercial LP of the Woodbury Soap Radio Show that was broadcast over the Columbia Broadcasting System on 23rd April, 1935. Whether they were the overdubbed original San Francisco recordings is, however, very doubtful and there are other unanswered

questions and unconfirmed speculations.

Indeed, the story of the recordings having been made at all might be viewed with some scepticism were it not for the fact that a prominent Australian collector claimed to be in possession of some of them with the piano and drums accompaniment. Notwithstanding, three of the songs ("Lullaby Of Broadway", "Clouds" and "Down By The River") were not copyrighted until 1935. On the other hand, contrary to general opinion, many radio shows were even at that time pre-recorded and it was thus technically possible for the allegations to be true. But why should Crosby record songs four months in advance? And if the recordings were made in San Francisco what else could it have been that would be urgent or important enough to interrupt a Crosby golfing session?

On the LP there is a slight error or "fluff" when Bing sings "Blame It On My Youth" which would indicate that the broadcast was live but he was never a great perfectionist and if he had recorded it in San Francisco and been pressed for time might well have let it go without a further attempt. There is no incontrovertible proof about the origin of the recordings and the exact truth will probably never be learned but with the remote possibility that the radio songs were the "B Masters" they are discussed below.

(266) OLE FAITHFUL (Jimmy Kennedy; Michael Carr) B 2093
Georgie Stoll & his Orchestra

A short recording of only a chorus and a reprised stanza by Bing, with no orchestral passage, has him sounding as if to the saddle born. In poignant mood he trots out the "western" cliches about riding the range, round-up days, white pastures and howling coyote and makes them sound fresh as he dwells lovingly on the rich vowel sounds. ("There's a coyote howling to the moon above" is most effective). The nostalgic tune, taken at a "clippety-clop" tempo, achieves just the right atmosphere. It is written in an unusual pattern that avoids the normal four stanza format and the lyrics are servicable enough. Kennedy must have had fun trying a triple rhyme in "yeller", "feller" and "mellow" but Ole Faithful could hardly have been called "old fellow" even if the song was written by a couple of Englishmen several thousand miles away from the prairie.

Michael Carr had spent some time as a cowhand in Montana and American composer Billy Hill made a wager with him that he couldn't write an "authentic" western song. It became his first big success and was extremely popular both in England and the US being recorded by many dance bands and country and western singers such as Jimmy Rodgers and Eddy Arnold.

(267) BLAME IT ON MY YOUTH (Edward Heyman; Oscar Levant) B 2094
Georgie Stoll & his Orchestra

This is a song of disillusionment expressing love, hurt and forgiveness and reflecting the anguish felt so deeply by the young. Crosby sings a heartfelt chorus of emotional torment with a controlled "sob" in the voice that is very moving. The orchestra gives him time to recover by taking the next half chorus, first with the reeds section leading and then a violin solo, before he reprises the last half of the chorus. The lyrics are well expressed and some of the lines are especially well interpreted (e.g. the stanza "I believed ... the world to me", "all night and day" and, in the reprise, "when first I learned ... my youth").

It is a very good song, much underrated, with just the right touch of pathos in the melody and with delicate, understanding lyrics. It was Crosby's second Levant song and a decided improvement on the previous one, "Gay Love" (recorded 27th September, 1929) written with a different lyricist.

The "fluff" referred to in a paragraph following the dateline (q.v.) occurs at the start of the song when Bing starts to sing the word "met" instead of "kissed" and the line is sung "when first we me-kissed". To add further confusion to an already complex situation another LP privately and more recently issued included the song without the "fluff" but from a careful examination it is otherwise identical and it may be assumed that it is the same with the error technically deleted.

Other recordings of the song were made by the Dorsey Brothers, Jan Garber, Gordon Macrae, Frank Sinatra and Nat "King" Cole.

(268) LULLABY OF BROADWAY (Al Dubin; Harry Warren) B 2095
Georgie Stoll & his Orchestra

There is a lively introduction to this classic from Hollywood films and it is then entirely vocal, without any orchestral break between Crosby's two choruses. A spirited accompaniment in fast tempo makes this a lullaby that would soothe only "Broadway babies". Warren's well constructed tune carries the brilliant lyrics along and Bing misses no opportunity to point the features of New York in the 'thirties concluding with a "lullaby" tempo and emphatic last two lines. In two choruses Dubin succinctly reveals "how it was" (the "ballyhoo", the "daffydils", the subway, "Angelo's and Maxie's", the "Daddy", the milkman) on "old Broadway".

The song deservedly won the Academy Award ("Oscar") for 1935 and was considered by Bing to be "one of the best Dubin and Warren had fashioned". The tune, alleged to have been based on part of a Brahms

"Hungarian Dance" with suggestions of the "Barcarolle" from Offenbach's "Tales Of Hoffman" and the finish of Gershwin's "I Got Rhythm", was written before the lyrics. The composers' opinions differed about the respective merits of New York and Hollywood. Warren preferred New York and when Dubin wrote the words he said they were especially for his partner. The song has remained ever popular and has been countlessly recorded including those made by Dick Powell, Wini Shaw, Boswell Sisters, Hal Kemp, Dorsey Brothers, Guy Lombardo, Ambrose (with Sam Browne vocal), Lew Stone, Ella Fitzgerald, Eddie Fisher, Doris Day and Gracie Fields.

Film: "Gold Diggers Of 1935" (Warner Bros: 1935) (Dick Powell, Gloria Stuart. Wini Shaw)
Film: "Lullaby Of Broadway" (Warner Bros: 1951) (Doris Day, Gene Nelson)

(269) CLOUDS (Gus Kahn; Walter Donaldson) B 2096
Georgie Stoll & his Orchestra

On the issued LP of the Woodbury Show (see paragraph below dateline) Crosby sings only three lines of this song although he sang it all in the next show (30th April, 1935). There were a number of recordings of the song including those by Benny Goodman, Les Brown, Ray Noble, Andy Kirk, Bing's brother Bob and by opera singer Gladys Swarthout but it failed to achieve any heights of popularity.

1926 - 1934

Part One ends with Bing Crosby peerless as a singer of popular songs. His recordings have shown his progress from self-expressed "chipmunk" chatter, band vocalist, embryonic rhythm singer to "King of the Crooners" and leading popular baritone. We have seen how new vocal mannerisms were tried, tested and either developed or discarded until an entirely new and unique style was formed and, indeed, at the end of 1934 was being developed further. His "b-b-boo", scat, vocables, and even whistling were either left by the wayside or being used more circumspectly as his voice and expertise matured with an immense range of material.

In 1933 he reached a peak of perfection with his "early" voice - many pundits have it that it remained the highest pinnacle of his entire career - and then gradually, almost impercebtibly, it became smoother; the "rawness" wore off, the higher register became less robust and more controlled while in the lower register there were indications of tonal beauty that had yet to reach its full magnificence.

Bing Crosby had a talent to enhance any tune and a natural ability to render lyrics dynamically but not infrequently a little carelessness would produce a less than perfect literary interpretation. It must be said that these lapses went largely unnoticed by a public that was enraptured by voice timbre and style and, furthermore, the lyrics of some of the songs were commonplace enough for it not to have much mattered. There were signs that this, too, at the end of 1934 was beginning to change; the style was less dramatic and the delivery was becoming more subtle.

Before ending Part One let us take a peek into the future. In 1958 Bing's eldest son, Gary, was returning home from Europe after finishing his service in the US Army and en route appeared in a televised show from the London Palladium. Referring to his father he remarked, succinctly, that "when my old man sings a song, it stays sung." The colloquialism was exactly right for it is no less than the truth that by then Bing had made more songs "his own" than any other performer before or since. Where many popular singers base a career upon being associated with a few songs Crosby, dating from 1931, has had many dozens. Whoever else may have sung the same song Bing Crosby always was able to give to it an added dimension. Looking at the list of titles that he recorded from 1931, when he commenced his solo career, to the end of 1934, this becomes self evident and there would be many more "Crosby" songs to come. Fashions and styles may change but the Crosby voice is ageless; his early recordings are still played more than half a century later and will continue to be.

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Book review

THE CROSBY COLLECTION 1926 - 1977

Part one: 1926 - 1934 By Fred Reynolds.

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The only single-word appellation that can be applied to this work is - 'Magnificent'.

By taking every song Bing performed for commercial recording in chronological order, and presenting every relevant detail including - date, recording venue, title, composers (lyrics and music), matrix number and Takes, accompaniment, band personnel, other recordings of the song by other artists, films and shows in which the song was either featured or used as the theme, and the two most important factors - the dissecting of the song itself and Bing's interpretation thereof - we are treated to an unbiased and masterly evaluation of the entire performance. The author carries over from his films book technique - The Road To Hollywood - the same approach, the same comprehensive and 'in depth' treatment, the same knowledgeable expertise and not least, the same consummate command of the English language that is a joy to read.

To my knowledge, the only other attempt to analyse Bing's performences to the n'th degree was Dr. J.T.H.Mize but his work is far from comprehensive, he is too fond of alliteration to a point of ungainliness and as his book was published in 1946 it leaves 31 years not covered.

Paragraph two of the 'Preface' mentions the word 'Discography' but in my opinion this is what the book is NOT. A discography is about discs, labels and catalogue numbers - as the word implies - 'a graphical listing of discs'. In this sterling work, discs are hardly mentioned at all. It is an excellent and pertinent choice for the book title - "The Crosby Collection" - and I am relieved it was not marred by the inclusion of the word 'discography'. The confines of the specific 'collection' to which the book title refers are Bing's interpretations of the songs recorded for commercial purposes. The book is not about records but about performances for recording. It would be an injustice to call it a 'discography'.

You've got to stand a long way back to obtain this class of composition otherwise it's so easy to become bogged down by minute detail that you lose all sense of perspective and objectivity. A detached and impartial approach is evidenced by the wider use of the name 'Crosby' and occasionally, 'Bing Crosby' as opposed to a fan's approach of 'Bing'.

This book - biographical and instructional - will find a place under 'in depth' human studies on the shelves of libraries way into the next century. It gives us the 'whole man' in close-up. Whilst the text will please the average reader as 'informative and interesting', in years to come, students of musical history will use it as their bible. It is a masterpiece of synopsis. We are indeed lucky to have a man of Fred Reynolds talent and capacity to give us this insight.

COLIN PUGH